GODLY

MEDITATIONS

vpon the most holy

Sacrament of the

L[redacted]

W[redacted]MANIE

things appertaining to the

due receiuing of so great a

Mystery, and to the right

disposing our selues vnto

the same.

Together with an Appendix

touching the controuersie about

the holy Eucharist,

Also godly Meditations concerning

the Diuine presence.

LONDON

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and very towardly dispo-
sition, euen from your
tender yeares, so applia-
ble to all goodnes (wher-

's respects.

TO THE TWO

Vertuous and modeſt Gentlewomen, Mris. KATHARINE, and Mris. FRANCIS SOVTHWELL, Sisters, attending vpon the Queenes Maieſtie, in her *Honorable Priuie Chamber.*

THat deſire you haue, Right vertuous, to ſerue GOD in Holyneſſe of Life, and very towardly diſpoſition, euen from your tender yeares, ſo applia-ble to all goodnes (wher-

in you may waxe olde by the grace of GOD,) haue often moued mee, to beseech him, who hath begun this good in you, to continue the same, euen vnto an aged and happie end. For, assuredly our religious Duties, and respective deuotion to God is worth all the Worldes dignity beside; nay, without this, all the Dignitie of this World is nothing worth.

Is not godlinesse the flower of all out actions? Yes verily. *Do but trie me* (saith the Lord) *if I will not poure out a Blessing.* Malachy

Malachy 3, 10. Hath hee not saide, *I will honour them that honour me.* 1 Sa. 2, 30. Et diligentes me diligo, *And I loue them them loue me? Prou.* 8. 17.

To exercise this your deuotionate duty vnto God, so often (and therefore often) as you prepare your selues vnto the blessed Sacrament of the Lords Supper, that high mysterie of humane saluation) I cõmend vnto you both, these Meditations hereafter following, in part, gathered out of the ancient Fathers, & some late reuerend Writers of,

this age, as *Luc. Penel.* and others, translated, augmented, and brought to a method, I offer them (as a Testimony of my due regard towards you,) and present them vnto your sober and gentle Patronage; wherein what is performed, you may haply, by obseruing find.

The occasion first mouing mee to gather somewhat tending to deuotion vpon this subiect, I meane the true vse of the most holy Sacrament, was the necessitie I found of some good meanes to stirre vp at times beseeming the best,

best, and best disposed deuotion of Christians towards the high Mysterie they haue in hand. Witty discourses, in matter of Controuersie, now a long time, no lesse learned, then large we haue had in our English tongue, about the holy Eucharist: but all this while we haue not much extant, appertaining to the substance thereof, to wit, touching our Christian preparation vnto the same, and our Christian participation of the same.

In the old Law the *Leuites* must be first sanctifi-

ed, and then they were to sanctifie the people; the Priests prepard themselues, and others to celebrate the old Passe-ouer: but vnto this Passe-ouer, euery one with al prepares himselfe, for that euerie one hath a soule to saue.

God saith vnto the same people of Israel, when your Children shall say vnto you; *Quæ est ista Religio?* Exod. 12,16. What meaneth this religion? or what is this solemne obseruation we keepe? you shall say vnto them, *This is the Lords Passeouer, &c.* which as it had a memoriall of a great deliuerance

rance past, so was it a most liuely Type, and figure of the true Passeouer that was to come, wherein the bloud of that most innocent Lambe of God, that tooke away the sinnes of the world, was in loue, shed for the Redemption of vs all. And therefore of all in generall, may that of *Ezechiah*, 2 *Chro.* 30, 18. bee well inferred; *The Lord bee mercifull vnto them that prepare themselues heereunto, &c.*

And to your selues (most vertuous Gentlewomen) I may more properly

perly apply the same in particular, the Lord euermore bee mercifull vnto you, in preparing your whole hearts to keep this Passeouer vnto the Lord your God; who of his infinite mercy, grant you a prosperous course of life, for the time present; and for the time to come, life euerlasting.

Yours, in all humble maner,

Christopher Sutton.

THE PREFACE to the Christian *Reader.*

IN perusing the controuersies of these our tims (good CHRISTIAN Reader) with a mind desirous afterward to satisfie the moderate minded, on the contrary part, in some questions (wherein without question we are mistaken, and are not according to right, rightly vnderstood) in perusing I say these controuersies, (to speake

ſpeake a plaine truth, as in the ſight of God,) I found many of them on both ſides, ſo full of inuectiue diſcourſes, as I was then ſorry to reade, and am now loath to mention. But amongſt other, entering into the controuerſie of the holy Euchariſt, me thought I was entered into a tempeſtuous Sea of all contention: for there I ſaw moſt vnnaturall bitterneſſe amongſt Chriſtians; Schiſmes in the Church, Factions in Commonwealths, all toſſing and turmoiling about this ſacred myſtery, as is lamentable to conſider.

2 I beganne at firſt to admire the patience of God, to ſee this heauenly miſterie of humane ſaluation left vnto the

the world, by him who did redeeme the world, as a seale of mercy, as a pledge of peace and loue betweene God and man, to become by the contentious humors of many, a very subiect for al dissention.

3 At the beholding hereof, might not the Prophet Ieremie wish (did he liue) that hee had water enough, & that his head were euen a fountain of teares? *Ier.* 9, vers. 1. Did the Sonne of God institute this most Diuine ordinance to exercise our ouer-running fantasies, and not rather to nourish and grace our poore redeemed soules?

4 In that Almighty God put enmity betweene the seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent, we may gather,

ther, that as the ſeede of the woman ſhould be at enmitie with the ſeed of the Serpent, ſo ſhould it be at vnitie with it ſelfe. We haue enemies enough abroad in the world, though Chriſtians be not at variance within themſelues, and that which is moſt to be lamented, about ſome principall points of their Chriſtian profeſſion: but of all other, about the ſacred Inſtitution of Chriſt their onely Sauiour and Redeemer, who left this his Ordinance not to raiſe matter of contention, but to ſtrengthen vs in Faith, and to continue a ioyful remembrance of his loue, in ſuffering and dying for the ſinnes of the World, vntill the time of his ſecond appearance,

pearance, or comming againe in his glory.

There is a farre better and safer course then to contend any longer, if men would at last set themselues on all parts to follow it: which is, to reuerence the Sonne of God in the vnsearchable Mysteries of his Wisedome, which are past finding out; and not to stand weighing them in the light scales and ballance of their owne reason, to drawe a veile ouer them, or say with the woman of Samaria, *Puteus est altus*, This Well is deepe: and so with pious hearts to reuerence them, and no more a doe.

5 When we haue done striuing, and euen wearied our

our ſelues in a thouſand difficulties, brought our mindes into a Labyrinth of doubts, vnleſſe wee will make Controuerſies immortal, we muſt draw at laſt to an iſſue.

The faithfull receiue the bleſſed Sacrament: wel, what doe they receiue? Certainely, Chriſt Ieſus, truely, and really: to make further ſcruple, is need leſſe curioſity: to giue light credence heereunto, is in part incredulity. What the Elements of Bread & Wine are in themſelues, is one thing, what they are, being now conſecrated to ſo holy a vſe, and receiued of the ſpiritually minded as the ſpirituall foode of their ſoules, is an other. What they are (I ſay) Chriſts owne words are ſufficient warrant for a belee-

uing

uing world vnto the worlds end.

Wherefore, to be ouerwitted in seeking, or doubting how this should be, is no way agreeable to that Faith and Obedience, that becommeth Christians. *Rerum absentium*, (saith an ancient Father) *præsens est fides, rerum impossibilium, possibilis est fides*; of things absent Faith is present, of things impossible, Faith is possible. *Panem vides, verbum audis, cui potius credis, sensui vel Christo?* Thou seest the Bread, thou heares the word, to which rather doest thou giue credite, whether to thy Sense, or to Christ? *Cur non potius gaudes? Quid quaris?* why doest thou not rather reioyce? why doest thou

thou queſtion?

6 In this caſe, that of the bleſſed Virgine, ſpoken of Chriſt at the marriage at Cana in Galile, would be remembred; *Quodcunque dixerit vobis, facite*; whatſoeuer he ſhall ſay vnto you, doe it.

When the Serpent ſaide vnto Eue; *Cur præcepit vobis Deus, vt non comederetis?* Why hath God commaunded you not to eate? Had ſhe anſwered; *Scio quod præcepit, non ſpectat ad me inueſtigare cauſam quare præcepit*: I know hee hath commanded me ſo, to ſeeke a reaſon why, or the cauſe wherfore I need not, I ought not, had ſhe not done farre better?

Some haue Faith (ſaith S. *Auſten* in his 132. Sermon

De

De tempore,) which haue not Art to defend it, or skill to ſhew a reaſon thereof, hee which hath is not the Faithfuller, but a little Learneder. *Quomodo fieri poteſt? accedite & percipietis*; How can this be? draw neere and you ſhal perceiue. *Accedite ad Deum, & illuminamini*; draw neere vnto God, and be yee lightened.

Wee haue many things in Chriſtianity offered vnto vs, as obiects of our Faith, wher in wee muſt hold captiue humane reaſon. *Et Deus erat, & homo erat*; *& mater erat, & virgo erat*; There was a God, and yet a man; a mother, and yet a Virgine: that it is ſo, we know it; how, or after what maner this is brought to paſſe,

passe, know we cannot. Of those things which may bee knowne, Saint *Bernard* speaking of the blessed Sacrament, *Serm. de cœna Domini*, *Mira sunt* (saith he) *quæ de Sacramento dicuntur: fides est necessaria, scientia rationis superuacua; scientia ratione & intellectu colligitur. fides sola authoritate inducitur*: Wonderfull things are they which are spoken of the Sacrament: heere faith is necessary, needles is the science of reason, this science is gathered by discourse and the vnderstanding; Faith is brought in by authority only. And going forward, hee addeth: *Hæc sunt, quæ expetunt simplicem creditorem, arguunt impium discussorem, credi oportet simpliciter,*

citer, quod inuestigari non potest vtiliter : nolite quærere quomodo fiat, nolite quærere vtrum fiat : these things require an humble beleeuer, and not an vngodly Discusser, that which curiously may not bee sought, may bee beleeued with safety : seeke not howe this should be done, doubt not whether it bee done or no.

We haue scope sufficient to exercise our Christian consideration, if we call to minde the ineffable wisedome and loue of God, who like a most prouident Father, was not onely content to prouide costly benefits for his children, but hath also found out so behouefull a meane for their participation of the same,

ſame, as is this holy myſtery.

8 Wee will not aske our Phyſitian howe it ſhall come to paſſe, that this, or that potion ſhould doe vs good: and ſhould wee be more buſie when Chriſt himſelfe doth miniſter ſo precious a receipt, ſo heauenly Phiſick for the health of our ſoules? God forbid. They were of the Capernaites, men without faith in Chriſt, and loue to Chriſt, who in murmuring manner ſayd, *Quomodo poteſt*? How, or which way can he doe this? It was a faithfull and louing Diſciple, that anſwered, *Tu Domine habes, verba vitæ*, Lord, thou haſt the words of life, *Iohn 6. 66.*

10 The people, as we read in

in the Gospell, who were cured by our Saviour, they came not vnto him to know or enquire by what meanes vertue should proceede from him: it sufficed them to receiue health, and therefore without more adoe, they gaue the glory vnto God, who had shewed such mercy vnto men.

11. There is both *docta ignorantia*, and *indocta scientia*, a learned ignorance, and an vnlearned science: the one, when men keepe themselues within the listes and limits of Obedience and Faith: the other when they hearken to the holy Ghost: *Be wise according to sobriety.*

12 Was not the Apostles,

O altitude! O the depth! better then all the ſearch of the world in ſo vnſearchable a myſtery, where he made ſilence the ſafeſt eloquence?

13 Without all queſtion, the Church of Rome hath erred, in medling too much with this ſacred Myſtery, and troubling the world with a multitude of vnprofitable and needleſſe diſputes about Tranſubſtantiation, and the like: for which, as for their halfe Communion, let them ſhewe their *Accepimus a Domino*: as we haue receiued from the Lord, or elſe we plainly tell them their plea is not ſufficient in Law, & will not hold for good.

14 Let the world in the name of God, now iudge of both

both: which giue great reuerence to the most Diuine Institution of the Sonne of God, whether they who too busily talke of changing the substance of the Elements into other, or they, who heere conceiue more, and with more reuerence then words can expresse: they who say, μέγα μυστήριον, this is, a great Mystery: or they who labour to search out a power and vertue vnsearchable. In a word, they, who will needs set downe a manner howe Christ is present in the Sacrament: or else they who doe acknowledge his presence there, after a manner inexplicable.

15 All this while our due estimation of this so high a

Mystery, is not yet fully vnderstoode (as I suppose) of many, who refuse our Christian assemblies in times beseeming. We honor the Passion of Christ our blessed Sauiour, in this most holy ordinance (I trust) with as dutifull hearts, as any Christians in the world. The heate of some fanciers we wish to be more temperate, and their zeale more according to knowledge, who euer loue to be fishing in troublesome waters, and doe their endeuour to crosse Antiquity, which was not ignorant of so many excellent things. In a word, we confesse that all the reuerence and deuotion a Christian heart can yeeld, is no way answerable

to

to the deapth and dignitie heereof.

16 God saide vnto Moses, *Put off thy Shoes for the ground where thou standest is Holie ground.* How reuerently we esteeme of this sacred Institution, God knoweth, and what we hold let men at the last seriously consider. The state of the Controuersie, I leaue in this discourse to discusse: matter of difference in opinion, is often but an abatement of Deuotion: words appertaining to piety, are sweeter then the hony or the hony combe. Although for no other cause, yet for this, I haue Collected out of the ancient writers: and in part out of *Penella*, the Meditations hereafter following.

17 To conclude then, it were to be wished, we had lesse contending in matters of Controversie, which availe little to godlinesse, and more sincere following the actions of Christian piety, which are much decaied in these sinfull times, (we see it too apparantly before our eyes:) that we had lesse questioning in generall, and in particular lesse curious prying into this sacred Mystery, and more religious preparing our selues to a due and dutifull participation of the same: we may consider, that after al the stirre about it, the deuotion of most is but so, so: for the heape of Volumes that treat of this subiect, how they all, in a manner, tend

onely to matter of contradiction. Wherefore omitting matter of contradiction, beseech we God to increase in vs reuerence, more and more, toward this most holy ordinance of Christ Iesus his Sonne, and our Sauiour, and that preparing our selues dutifully to receiue him in the state of grace, we may be receiued of him into the state of glory, to sit at his Table in his Kingdome, to liue with him, and reigne with him. Amen.

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Diuine

GODLY MEDITATIONS VPON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE LORDS SVPPER.

CHAP. I.

Of the first Institution of this most Holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

AMongst other parts of Diuine worship, and religious duties of a Christian life, which knit men in loue & seruice vnto God, (for who should haue the fruit but he that planted the tree) there is

none more solemne, none more diuine, then is the institution of the most holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper, at the participation whereof wee present our selues before God: wee honour him in the mystery of humane redemption, by a spirituall vnion with Christ his Sonne wee become partakers of our greatest good.

Fasting humbleth, Prayer beseecheth, Repentance bewaileth, Charitie worketh, Faith beleeueth: but the holy Sacrament applieth all by Christ Jesus his merites to the saluation of our soules.

2 If any aske (saith an ancient Father) the Jewes, why they keep their passeouer, all that they will answer is, to relate of a bondage in Egypt, of Pharao their oppressor, of a Moses Gods seruant their deliuerer: But if any aske mee, which am a Christian of our heauenly passeouer, I can shew him, not of Moses a seruant, but of Christ Jesus the onely

Sonne

Sonne of God: of a more terrible Pharao, the prince of darkenesse: of a more wofull bondage, the shadow of death: and last of all, of a deliuerance indeed by the blood of that immaculate Lamb, once offered for the sinnes of the world. Heb. 9. 28.

3 For our comfortable accesse to this most holy mystery, let vs call to minde the first institution of the same, how wee haue Christs owne precept, and his promise. Matt. 25. 26. Luke 22. 19. His precept, Hoc facite, doe this: His promise, Hoc est corpus meum, hic est sanguis meus, &c. This is my body which was giuen for you, this is my blood which is shed for you: as if heere I offer you the benefit of my sufferings, and leaue you a pledge at parting of my deerest loue. Novum Testamentum, a new Testament, a new league or couenant betweene God and man, that God will now thinke on your sinnes in iustice no more.

4 S. Austen in his 118. Epi-

stle ad Ianuarium, saith our Sauiour, deferred the institution of this most diuine Sacrament, to the end of his life, as his last farewell, that the dignitie and excellencie thereof, might make the more deepe impression in his Disciples hearts, increase in them greater loue, and deuotion, after his departure from them.

5 In the 14. and 16. of Exodus, God gaue the people of Israel, for the time of their abode in the wildernes, Manna from heauen: which Manna they gathered vntill they came vnto the land of Promise: in like manner, so long as we remain in the wildernes of this world, wee are gathering this our heauenly Manna, but when we come vnto that promised Canaan, then need we gather Manna no more.

6 Christ our Sauiour, when the time drew neere, that hee should be betrayed and deliuered vp vnto death, hee communeth with his disciples after this maner, Luke 22. 15. I haue earnestly

ly desired to eate the Passeouer with you before I suffer, & accepit panem, & benedixit, &c. And he tooke bread and blessed it, In like manner hee tooke the cup. In consecrating the elements of Bread and Wine, his prayers went vp to heauen, his benefites remaine with his Church heere on earth: the visible elementes which hee tooke, and gaue, declare two things: the one, that hee would the morrow following, make himselfe and oblation for the redemption of many, vpon the altar of the crosse: the other, that he would become vnto the faithful: by this meanes a diuine sustenance for their soules. And thus he prouideth for himselfe an altar for his table, in both, God hath the glorie, and man the benefit.

The first Meditation vpon this blessed Institution.

COnsider how GOD created the world for man: and man

onely to worship his Creator: a most excellent part of which worship is the holy Sacrament.

2 Consider, how the Lord Jesus fore-seeing the good of his Church, & the affection of his Apostles, to follow after his passion, knowing what they should need, and what wee all of vs should need, decreed to leaue vnto them the holy Eucharist, that they and we might receiue helpe and strength by vertue thereof.

3 Consider, how this help and strength is had by a spiritual repast: that as nourishments, and the bodie nourished become one, so Christ and faithfull receiuers doe become one with the Sonne of God.

4 Consider, Christ our Sauiour in his passion as a Testator: his inheritance is in heauen, his Legacies are his graces, the Executor is the holy Ghost, his Testament or Will, are promises of life laid downe in his Word, the Seales are the two Sacraments confirming these promises.

5 Con-

5 Consider, how the faithfull Communicant doth receiue that which the wordes doe sound, to wit, preseruation vnto life euerlasting, both their bodies and soules.

The fruit of this Meditation.

The fruit of this meditation is this, that euery one dispose himselfe with all deuotion to this holy institution, that he leaue all earthly cogitations beneath, as Abraham in the 22. of Genesis did his seruantes when he went vp to the Mount to doe sacrifice vnto God.

A spirituall Soliloquie, or Meditation of the Soule with God vpon these Meditations.

OMnipotent & euerlasting God, make me I beseech thee, thy vnworthy seruant, what said I? thy seruant?

yea rather by reason of sin thine enemy, O Lord, make me carefull in the performance of this so hie a part of thy holy worship. I come Lord, as the sick to the physitian of life, as an offender to the Lord of mercy, as the blind, to the light of the eternall Sun, as the poore and needy to the God of heauen and earth, therefore, O Lord, cure my infirmities, pardon my offences, lighten my blindnesse, inrich my pouertie, grant that I may with such reuerence receiue this heauenly Manna, with such contrition and deuotion, with such puritie and faith, with such a purpose and intent, as is expedient for my saluation: and grant that at last I may behold perpetually thy beloued Sonne with face reuealed, whom now I receiue in the way by Faith onely: who liueth and raigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God for euer and euer, Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the loue of Christ shewed vnto faithfull beleeuers, in ordaining this most holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

FOr that this Sacrament is a Sacrament of Loue: and left vnto vs from the loue of our beloued Sauiour, it is conuenient, that to put away the suspition of ingratitude, it bee receiued and handled with loue chiefly, seeing wee can requite in no other thing, the loue declared in ordaining this Sacrament, so full of loue: then by loue, of which loue, God would that we should dispose, and so change it into what wee see most pleasing to him: wherevpon, as Christ while hee giueth himselfe to vs for meate, giueth vs a token of

his highest loue, with his grace, with so many merits of his preachings, labours, fastings, prayers: so we when we giue to God our loue, doe giue him all things which wee haue most precious: hence it commeth that God doth more esteeme, and that more worthily too: of this one loue, then of all other thinges in the world, neither doth hee require any other thing of vs. When elsewhere hee saith, Prou. 23. 26. My sonne giue mee thy heart: that is to say, the loue which is thine. When Christ our Sauiour humbled himselfe to be baptized of Iohn Baptist, Matth. 14. it made Iohn more humble himselfe to Christ: his loue should wound our hearts, and make vs loue him who is loue it selfe: and this loue of his is manifest vnto vs by instituting this holy Sacrament.

When Nathan the Prophet would shew King Dauid, in the 3. of Samuel 12. 3. What loue the poore man bare to that sheepe which

which hee nourished in his bosome, He gaue him (saith hee) of his owne morsels to eate, and of his owne cup to drinke. Christ to shew his loue towardes vs, hath giuen vs of his own bread, and of his owne cup: nay he hath giuen vs his own body as bread, his owne blood as wine for the nourishment of our soules.

Dauid wondred at the exceeding loue of God. 1. Sam. 1.18. saying, Who am I, O Lord God, that thou hast brought mee vnto this: we may with admiration, say, Lord what is earth and ashes, that thou hast exalted the same to this dignitie? Almighty God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, so doth hee to the faithfull inflamed with loue.

God did highly honor Ioshua, in that he made the sunne to stay vntill hee had the victorie, but what honour had it beene, had he brought it downe from heauen? this hath hee done for vs by the Sonne of righteousnesse, who exiled him-selfe thirtie three

yeares

peares from the throne of glorie, and became the Sonne of man, that wee might bee made the sonnes of God.

The Second Meditation.

COnsider, how in this holy mystery thou art bound to loue the Gift, with the Giuer: If when the people would haue made Christ a King, Ioh. 6. 15. he had then sought to requite their fauour, it had not beene so much: but when they gaue him gaule for to eate, and vineger to drinke, then to leaue this testimonie of fauour and loue, it was loue without example. Had hee bestowed this so great a gift on the Saints or Angels, it had not been so wonderfull: but bestowing it on poore sinners, this was pure loue indeed.

2 Consider, how great care our Sauiour hath shewed towardes vs, in Instituting this Sacrament: seeing nothing could bee giuen more excellent, more

more deere. When hee loued his which were in the world, hee loued them vnto the end. Ioh. 13. 1.

3 Consider, what S. Chrysostome saith, our Lord instituted this Diuine Sacrament, that we might be made one with him, for as much as he is such a meat as doth turne it selfe into the worthie Receiuer. So hereby, Christ doth drawe vs vnto him, with the bonds of loue, and doth in this gift allure vs to loue him. Meat doth turne the nourishments into the bodie nourished: the same is done by feruencie of loue in faithfull Receiuers.

The fruit of this Meditation.

The fruit of this Meditation is, that euerie one meditating on the loue of Christ, aske the question, and make the answer with the Prophet, Psal. 115. 11. Quid retribuam: &c. What shal I giue vnto the Lord for all the benefits hee hath done vnto me? I will take the Cup of saluation, &c.

A spirituall Soliloquie vpon this Meditation.

O Sweet Iesus, could it be, that such was thy loue towards vs, that when thou waste the King of glory, & Creator of all the world, thou wouldest thy selfe bee meate for thine owne creatures? O Loue, thy loue is too too great: for I thought sufficient, that which the Wise-man speaketh, Loue is as strong as death: But I see much more ma- be spoken of this thy loue, for thy arrowes ouercomming heauen, doe penetrate where death doth not come nor approach: thou also dost fire this loue in the heart of man, and not onely plucke it away from all things created, but euen from it selfe.

It was sufficient that thou wast giuen to vs for a Lord and God: in which thing the Prophet hath placed this blessednes:

Psalme

Psalme 145. 16. Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord. But loue hath drawne thee to that, which the wisedome of man cannot comprehend: and it remaineth most true, that thou when thou waste God of all maiestie, most infinite and immortall, wert made man, didst die and suffer for vs.

When I consider that thou in the selfe-same time wherein the streames of thy tribulations did ouerflow: wherein thy onely thought constrained a bloodie sweate out of thy bodie, forgetfull of thine owne selfe, and all the torments which were preparing, waste carefull of procuring such a meate for vs, as might strengthen vs in the state of grace, vntill we see thee in the state of glorie. O amiable Iesu: how truely is it written of thy loue in the eight of the Canticles, and 7. verse? Many waters could not extinguish this loue, nor floudes ouer-whelme it: namely, many waters of thy passion,

sion, & floods of thy griefe could not withhold thee, whereby thou wouldest not prouide and impart this singular and precious gift for vs? O sweete Iesus, it had beene enough to cal vs Brethren, when thou wert humbled on the earth, but wilt thou so call vs ascending to heauen, saying, I ascend to my Father, and your Father, &c. May to call the poore so, that thou wouldest, and wilt call them Brethren, whatsoeuer pea did to the least of these my Brethren.

The Prophet Elisha, in the second of Kings 1. 8. greatly esteemed the cloake of his maister Eliah, left him at his departure: wherewith hee diuided the waters of Iordan, and passed ouer on drie foote: but here the Lord and God of Eliah, hath left vnto thee not any garment, but his most sacred bodie, that he may be a companion with thee in this laboursome pilgrimage, in passing ouer the waters of tribulation, and an wholesome food in

in a spirituall life.

Iudge now then how much thou oughtest to re-loue him: and with what ardent affection to receiue him? In the meane time, beseech this Benefactor, that it happen not vnto thee, as vnto the people of the Iewes: to whom when our Lord Iesus offered himselfe for their Maister and Teacher, they renouncing his doctrine and maister-ship, keepe still the couering of their eyes: and which was worse, ioyned to their blindnesse, the sinne of vnthankfulnesse.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the great excellencie and worthinesse of this Sacrament.

MOst high and sumptuous is the preparation which wisedom hath ordained, bountie furnished, & Christ himselfe with his honourable presence beautified. This preparation is not as in times past in the wildernesse, or in the mouable tabernacle of Moses: or the fixed Temple of Salomon, but in a great Chamber, a large vpper roome in the most ample Church, dispersed far and wide vpon the face of the earth: here Christ himselfe is the giuer, and the gift: the feeder and the food.

It

It is said of Ezechiah, in the second of Chronicles 30. that hee kept a Passeouer, and such a Passeouer as neuer was there any the like before: but much more may be sayd of Christs holy Supper. Admire not any longer the sumptuous preparation, or the greatnesse of the gift of King Assuerus, in the fourth of Hester, after hee betrothed vnto him Hester in marriage: for those gifts were earthly, and could not giue life and spirit: admire rather the precious gift of Christ, giuen vnto his Church after hee had espoused her vnto himselfe: which gift is heauenly, and of infinite value. yea, of such value, that it cannot be valued.

The third Meditation.

COnsider the great excellencie of this holy and heauenly feast where Christ the true Paschall Lambe is receiued, the memorie of his death and

and passion recounted, the mind filled with grace, and a pledge of future glorie giuen vnto vs.

2 Consider these fiue differences, which are betweene this Feast, and the Feastes of the world.

1 The feasts of the world are prophane, for in them neither is their holy meate, neither are they ordained for the health of the soule, but this feast is a sanctified feast and ordained principally for the health of the soule.

2 In the feastes of the world there is varietie, and by how much the more the varietie is the greater, by so much the more is the feast commended: in this spiritual banket it is not so, wherein Christ being infinite, containeth in him all perfection, and can alone satisfie the soule.

3 In the feasts of the world, there is little speech had of death, suffering affliction and tribulations, rather discourse is had of pleasures: but in this Feast of Christ, the memorial of his death

and

and passion, his sufferings of loue for our saluation, is remembred.

4 In this Banquet the mind is filled with the grace of Christ which bringeth saluation, and the increase of heauenly gifts: but in the banquets of the world the bodie is replenished with meates, that often bring diseases to the bodie, and spirituall destruction to the soule.

5 In the feasts of the world, for the great excesse vsed in them they open a way to hell: but in this holy Feast, Christ setteth open vnto vs the readie way vnto heauen.

Farther considerations of this heauenly Banquet.

COnsider how well pleasing it is to the Lord Iesus, that we doe all those things in this Feast, which guests inuited of the Prince, to some solemne preparation, are wont to doe.

1 First,

1 First, they expect with great desire, the houre of this feast, and giue their diligent attendance, that they come in decent & seemely manner, well adorned.

2 Secondly, they knowing that nothing is more acceptable vnto the Prince, who inuiteth them, then to feed heartily on the meats prepared: they come with empty stomackes, and a desire to be satisfied.

3 Thirdly, they diligently beware, that they neither doe nor speake any thing which may bee offensiue to the person which hath called them.

4 Fourthly, they do not by and by depart, but stay a while & enterchange familiar conference with the prince: at one time praising his liberalitie, at another, the magnificence of the feast.

5 Fiftly, at their departure they yeeld reuerence, and giue humble thankes for the fauour vouchsafed them: acknowledging their bounden dutie vnto so Noble a Prince, they offer themselues to be

be readie at his pleasure, to performe any seruice he shall command them.

These properties of good and thankful guests should much rather be performed in this heauenly feast, whereunto we are called by the Son of God himselfe: and therefore wee should expect, receiue with ioy, and yeeld thanks: promising to serue him in holinesse and righteousnesse all the dayes of our life.

The fruit of these Considerations.

The fruit of these considerations may be drawn from a meditation of the greatnesse & magnificencie of this so holy a mysterie, which greatnesse may stirre vs vp to bee thankefull to so liberall a Lord, who calleth vs to so great honor, and bestoweth so many benefites, yet requireth so few of vs againe.

A spirituall Soliloquie.

IT is no meruaile (O Lord) if the bountifulnesse of thy holy Feast doe make vs astonished: for Esaias in the twentith fiue Chapter of his Prophecie, fore-seeing it many ages before, as a picture shadowed ouer, stood amazed thereat, and saith, to the praise and glorie thereof, The Lord of hosts shall make to all people, on this hill a feast of fatlings, Esay 25.6. Great shall this feast be, O holy Prophet, for that not euerie one, but the Lord of hostes shall ordaine it, and that not to certaine men alone: but to all people of the world, neither in euery place, but on a hill: lastly, it shall bee a feast of fatlings: yea, of the most heauenly foode that euer was.

Be glad, O holy Church, for that thou art that holy hill, chosen of GOD for that heauenly Banquet: in thee doth stand the table

table prepared, thy deere children are like the Olive branches in the compasse thereof.

Arise my Soule, and depart from thy seike foorthwith out of this darke valley: for the Lord doth invite thee to his feast, not with thundring and lightening, as hee did the children of Israel in the 19. of Exodus: but hee inuiteth thee with louing wordes, Matth. 11. 26. Come vnto mee all yee that labour, and are heauie laden, and I will refresh you. Wee may now goe in safetie. That Law doth not any longer stand in force: Hee that toucheth the Hill shall dye the death. Exodus 19. 23. But rather, he that commeth to this Hill, and eateth of this Sacrament, shall liue for euer.

But marke (my Soule) that all cannot ascend to this Hill, but only as the Kingly Prophet speaketh, Psal. 15. 1. the harmlesse and pure in heart: and not after euerie sort, but with a wedding garment Matt. 22. 26. wherewith

wee ought to bee decked
Christs Feast, otherwise we
shall heare those terrible words
Cast him bound hand and foot
into vtter darkenesse.

Woe be to me (O Lord) wh
like the Prodigall sonne. Luk
15.23. by luxurious liuing ha
bewrayed and torne the garme
of innocency, receiued in ho
Baptisme: woe wretched cre
ture that I am, if thou helpe m
not (O Lord) I dare not a
peare at thy holy Feast: wh
shall I doe? if for my sinnes I
shall be refused of thee: what sh
I doe, when with shame I a
forbidden to come without
wedding Garment? happily I
may sowe mee a garment
leaues as Adam did, after he l
the garment of Innocencie g
uen him of God: but alas, th
will as little profit me, as it pr
fited Adam, when hee dur
not come into Gods sight wi
that garment, but hid himselfe
but if I hide my selfe, shal I n
bee depriued of thy heauenl
an

and healthsome Feast?

I turne mee therefore to thee (O Father of mercy) and I confesse that I haue offended thee after that manner, that I am no more worthy to bee called thy sonne: but trusting in thy infinite goodnesse, I beseech thee, that thou wilt not respect the greatnesse of my offences, but the greatnesse of thy goodnesse, I am not worthy to bee called thy sonne: make mee (O Lord) as thy meanest seruant. Grant mee onely the lowest roome at thy table, and it sufficeth.

CHAP. IIII.

Of the wonderfull things of this Sacrament.

WOnderfull is G
in all his worke
but in none m
to be admired th
in the holy Euchar

Amongst other names of
cellencie which the Proph
Esay attributeth to the seco
person in Trinitie, this is on
His Name is wonderful, Esa. 9.
How truely this is verified
this his holy institution, ma
left to the contemplation
faith: which is then most stro
when reason stands mute.

Whe

When as almighty God rained down Manna amongst the people of Israel, Exodus 16. 15. the people being amazed at the sight thereof, said Manhu, that is, what is this? and the thing seemed so wonderfull, that they beholding it truely admirable, passed ouer as it were to the first word Man: Lord what is this? what is this, that the Sonne of God should vndertake the nature of man, and after a spirituall and heauenly manner, be giuen for meate to a new people, to whom all things are manifest in truth?

What is this? that he which dwelleth in Heauen, sitteth amongst the Quire of Angels, would come into the world, and after a wonderfull and admirable manner, dwell with the sons of men?

What is this? that the Lord of Maiestie, who is of the same substance with the Father and the Holy Ghost, will be made one with man, and take vp his mansion with him?

What meate is this, which doth cleanse our Leprosie, comfort the conscience, and cure our soules?

What is this? What pietie is this? what bowels of mercie are these? surely the gift is worthy of the Giuer. Salomon brake out into a certaine kind of admiration, speaking of the Arke of the Couenant, in the first of Kings 8. 27. Ergone putandum est, quod vere Deus habitat super terram, si eum cœli, & cœli cœlorum capere non possunt, quanto minus domus hæc? And is it true indeed, that God will abide on earth, whom the heauens, nor the heauens of heauens cannot containe, much lesse this house? O the depth of the wisedome of the most Highest: thy iudgements are past finding out. But should we presume to lift vp our eyes against those glistering beames, whereby the sharpest Eagle may bee dazled? No surely, for then there would bee no end of admiration, superfluous were it to wade far,

wee

wee best know Gods mysteries, when with all thankfulnesse wee admire them, and say, Blessed be God in all his workes.

Saint Chrysostome in his 61. Homily to the Priests of Antioch, calleth this Sacrament the miracle of the mysteries of the Christian Law, wherein our Saviour imparteth his Bodie and Blood, thereby to declare the desire wherewith he burneth of uniting himselfe vnto vs, which is proper to them that loue ardentlie. Heere Sampsons riddle is solued: De comedente exiuit cibus, de forti egressa est dulcedo: Out of the eater came meate: Out of the strong came sweetnesse: what is stronger then the Lyon? what sweeter then hony? Christ is the Lyon of the Tribe of Iuda: hony, the spirituall sweetnesse of the holy Eucharist.

The Fourth Meditation.

Of the wonderfull things of this Sacrament.

LEt vs behold with the eyes of our Fayth, one of the greatest workes of God vnder Heauen: and for this inestimable mysterie, laude and praise his holy Name.

2 Let vs with thankful hearts, wonder at the loue of God, who after he receiued vs into his Family, there placed vs, not as seruants, but as sonnes, and that he might shew the part of a carefull Father, doth prouide a meane to nourish vs: and not content with that, would haue his owne Sonne to institute that meane, by the spirituall participation of himselfe.

3 Consider the Diuine wise-

dome

dome of the Sonne of God, who respecting our weakenesse, hath conueighed vnto vs his Bodie and Blood, after a Diuine and spirituall manner, vnder the formes of Bread and Wine.

4 Consider, how by this holy Communion, occasion is giuen to exercise our faith in prayer, and to prepare our soules, which liue by grace, as our bodies doe by food.

5 Consider, the high and worthy effect of this heauenly foode, which is not so much changed into the substance of the eater, as it doth rather change the eater into the substance of it: the meate being Diuine, doth make vs also Diuine. O the omnipotent wisedome and power of the loue of God?

The Fruit.

The Fruit of this Meditation, is, to lift vp our selues aboue our selues, and bielle GOD for this wonderfull be-

neſſe, without curious ſearching, and needleſſe queſtioning about the manner how, but to giue God thankes, and bee aſhamed rather at our ſelues, that neither the wonderfulnes of his power, nor the greatneſſe of his benefits can make vs no more to loue him then we doe.

The Spirituall Soliloquie.

O My ſoule, thou art happy, which haſt prepared for thee ſo wonderfull and ſo high a repaſt, as there can bee found none either in heauen or earth higher: for in it is contained that which the Apoſtle in the 1. and 3. to the Hebrewes, calleth, The brightneſſe of the glorie of God but hidden, that hee might heape on thee the more benefits: thou knoweſt Moſes, deſcending from the Mount Sinah, on which he had talked with God, the children of Iſrael could not talke with him for the brightnes of his face: wherefore (as the

Scrip-

Scripture ſaith) he put a couering before his face: Exod. 34. 16. that all might ſpeake with him. In like ſort our heauenly Moſes hath done, who not content with thy deliuerance from the hard ſeruitude of Egypt and ſpirituall Pharao: but that thou ſhouldeſt not bee terrified with the great brightneſſe of his glorie, after an ineffable manner doth come vnto thee, and commune with thee.

Iacob ſaid, Surely God was in this place, and I was not aware of it, Gen. 28. 16.

O wonderfull loue, how farre haſt thou gone with my Lord? Juſt cauſe haſt thou (O my Soule) to reioyce, and in reioycing to admire the goodneſſe of thy Bleſſed Sauiour: ceaſe to meaſure the greatneſſe of this worke, by the weakeneſſe of thine owne vnderſtanding: ſay rather with the Prophet, Pſalme 111. Memoriam fecit mirabilium ſuorum: the mercifull Lord hath made a memorial of

of his wonders, hee hath giuen meate to them that feare him.

When the Sonne of GOD cloathed himselfe with our flesh, it was a worke verie admirable, for therein hee assumed humane Nature, mortall and passible: but when the faithfull receiue the holy Eucharist, man doth participate a Diuine Nature immortall and heauenly. Hence it was said of God, by the Psalmist, Psalme 86. 9. Tu es magnus, faciens mirabilia, Lord thou art great, doing wonderfull things.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The manifold effects and fruits of this holy Sacrament in generall.

WEe may remēber, that which indeed we cannot forget; that as man consisteth of soule & bodie, so doth hee also leade a twofold life, the one corporall, ready to fall into a thousand dangers and casualties, the other spirituall, subiect to as many or more: The life of the bodie consisteth of the vnion of the soule with the bodie; The life of the soule consisteth of another vnion which is to

to bee vnited to Christ. Both these, as they haue their defects, so haue they also their remedies, and sustentations: For the life naturall, God hath ordained naturall sustenance: for the life super-naturall, super-naturall nourishment.

But that which at all times is most to bee lamented, is, that whereas the spirituall life is far more excellent then the temporall, the temporall notwithstanding is more regarded and preferred. For what thing doth not a sicke bodie doe to recouer his health? hee neglecteth all charges and griefes, hee esteemeth nothing of the bitternesse of Medicines, he contemneth the sharpenesse of paines, the most experienced Physitians, the best Preseruatiues are then sought for, and all for bodily health, which endureth but for a little time. And are we so carefull for the health of our soule? Would to GOD we were! then would we repaire with more deuotion,

then commonly wee doe vnto this moſt holy ſacrament, where our ſpirituall life is preſerued and ſtrengthened.

Three thinges there are, ſayth one, verie neceſſarie for the life of Man: the mother which brings him foorth: the meate which ſuſtaineth him: and the Phyſitian that cures him when he is ſicke.

The ſame three are neceſſarie for the life Spirituall. The Mother, is Baptiſme: the meate which ſuſtaineth, is the holy Euchariſt, the Phyſitian to cure, is Repentance.

Now then, as the bodie without meates, cannot endure labour and liue: no more can the ſoule without this ſpirituall repaſt, ſubſtain the labours of this pilgrimage: the aſſaults of her enemies, and liue. The aire being corrupted when we go forth of doores, we fortifie our ſelues with ſome preſeruatiues. This world is corrupted, our preſeruatiue againſt temptations is this holy Euchariſt. When

When entring a way possessed with the Enemy, arme themselues with weapons, get them good company: seeing we haue in all the way of our life many enemies visible and inuisible, shall wee not arme our selues, and take vnto vs Christ our Captaine?

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the most principall effects of this Sacrament in particular.

The first is, as wee may so speake, to Deifie, that is, to make man diuine or like vnto God himselfe: here, in the state of grace, and hereafter in the state of glorie: and for this cause it is instituted in forme of nourishments. For as nourishments, and the body nourished, become one: so Christ and the faithfull receiuers. Other meats receiue life of the bodie, this giueth life to the soule.

2 A second effect is, that with Christ are giuen vs all his merits and rewards which he hath purchased: here the hyre is giuen vs

vs with the honey.

3 The third effect of this Sacrament, is: That hereby a continuall and constant remembrance of Christ Iesus our only Sauiour is continued: whereby wee shew his death vntill hee come: and therefore hee sayth: Matt. 26. 26. Hoc facite in mei memoriam: Doe this in remembrance of me.

4 The fourth effect is, to stirre vp in vs the loue of God and our Neighbour: Of God, who first loued vs: Of our Neighbour, for his sake who hath giuen vs this Commandement, That hee that loueth God, should loue his Neighbour also, Ioh. 4. 11.

5 The fifth effect is to sanctifie: for that it doth not onely sanctifie our soules, but our bodies also to all holinesse, by the power of Christs body: it is manifest that the forbidden meat receiued of our first Parents, infected our soules, and defiled our bodies, it was meete therefore, that

that this heauenly foode should cause sanctification, not onely in our soules, but also in our bodies. So Christ will neuer send them away empty, that they faint by the way that follow him, as the people did into the Desart, Matth. 15.32.

What should wee enter into that sea of the manifolde effects of this Sacrament? If I am sicke, may the deuout soule say, heere I may cure mee: if I am whole, heere I shall keepe me: if liuing, heere I shall comfort me: if dead in sinne, heere I shal raise me: if I desire for to burne with the loue of God, heere I may inflame me: if I am cold in deuotion, heere I may warme mee: if I am blinde, heere I may enlighten mee: if spotted, heere I may cleanse mee. I will not flie, as Adam sometime did, from the presence of GOD, because here I can couer mee, nor runne away for feare of the enemy, for heere I shall finde grace to strengthen mee.

S. Cyrill

S. Cyrill in his fourth booke vpon Iohn, saith: Here, not only death is put to flight: but all spirituall diseases that cause death are expelled, the cruell and inordinate loue of our members is repressed, and the perturbations of the minde quieted.

Thomas Aquinas, called this Sacrament a precious banquet, admirable, wholesome, and full of all sweetnesse: and to prouoke vs the more to loue it he addeth: Heere sinnes are cleansed, Vertues increased, the minde made fertile with all spirituall graces: and that when Christ saw his Disciples to ware sad for his departure, he left vnto them this Sacrament for a singular comfort.

Amongst these effects, this may not bee omitted: that this holy Sacrament is a pledge of the Resurreation, as it is mentioned in the hundred Canon of the first Councell of Neece: for this Eucharisticall food (saith Iustine Martyr, Apolog. 2.) is not vsed

vsed by concoction and alteration, but doth change the mortalitie of our bodies, into his owne Nature, that is, into immortalitie, life and glory. Wherefore, amongst other effects, this doth admonish vs of the immortalitie of our bodies: for as Christs bodie did not remaine in death, so also shall not ours: For, it cannot be that our bodies should remaine in their Sepulchers, seeing that they are nourished by Christs Body and Blood. Iræn. Lib. 4. ad Val.

The fruits of this Sactament.

The fruits hereof may be reduced to these twelue properties: First, of all the properties, it is, to quicken: secondly, to set at libertie: thirdly, to enflame: fourthly, to giue patience in trouble: fiftly, to nourish: sixtly, to restore: seuenthly, to vnite: eightly, to communicate: ninthly, to make whole: tenthly, to preserue: eleuenthly,

to

to ſtrengthen: twelfthly, to conduct through: And therefore this Sacrament is called Viaticum, the prouiſion for the way, as Elias paſſed his iourney in the ſtrength of his meate, 1. Kings 19. 8. vntill hee came to the Mount Horeb: ſo wee in the ſtrength of this meate, vntill we come to heauen.

It is written of Obededon, in 2. Sam. 3. That hee and his did proſper, becauſe hee receiued the Arke of God into his houſe: how much more ſhall this be accompliſhed in thoſe, who receiue Chriſt Jeſus truely into their ſoules? the manifolde effects whereof by increaſe of grace, from grace to grace, the faithfull feele and finde as much.

The Fifth Meditation.

COnſider, that as the ſoule newly created of God, ſo ſoon as it commeth into the body, which deſcended of Adam, is

is forthwith contaminated and made partaker of the whole euill and miserie, wherein he inwrapped mankind by his Transgression: So likewise, as soone as the soule receiueth Christ, it is forthwith made partaker of his merites and righteousnesse. And this is one cause, why this Sacrament is called a Communion, where after a spirituall manner, Datur nobis, quod datur pro nobis, That is giuen to vs, which is giuen for vs.

2 Consider, that as he bringeth vnto thee the fruite of his life and death, his resurrection and ascension: so also he desireth to communicate thee vnto his members.

3 Consider, that the vnderstanding is so lightened by this holy Sacrament, that it easily commeth into the knowledge of God: whence those two Disciples going to Emaus, straight vpon the breaking of Bread, as the Scripture saith, their eyes were opened, and they

they knew the Lord.

4 Consider, that it was not the hemme of the garment: for what vertue could there bee in so meane a subiect to procure health? But it was the hemme of Christs garment. So it is not Bread and Wine, but this bread, this wine, that sanctifieth our soules.

5 Consider, how it reneweth Gods grace, that like as bodily food doth renew that which naturall heate had consumed: So this heauenly nourishment restoreth that which the Soule, thorough the heate of euill Desires, had lost.

6 Consider, it ioyneth vs to Christ our head, and also vnto our neighbors, who are Christs members, prouoking vs to loue them with true charitie: and therfore this Sacrament is called of the Fathers, the Sacrament of Vnion and Loue. For Christ by giuing his the same food, vniteth them in one diuine essence. Saint Augustine writeth,

teth, that this Sacrament is instituted vnder the forme of bread and wine. For that as bread is made of many graines, and the wine one of many grapes: so the faithfull by loue and vnitie, are made one by Christ their head: one, in consent and concorde amongst themselues.

7 Consider the great peace and tranquillity of the minde which commeth by this Sacrament, that as the ship was tossed and troubled before: but when Christ once came into it, all was calme: so in this worlde wee are often troubled: but whē Christ comes all is quiet. We may call to mind what our Sauiour woulde haue his Disciples say, into what house soeuer they entered into: Peace be vnto this house, Lu. 10. 5. How much more may it bee sayd of that heart where this holy mystery is truly and worthily receiued: Peace be vnto this heart? It is called a Supper, and after supper we are wont to take rest.

The Fruit of this Meditation.

IESV, to desire with our whole heart to haue part in these effects, to hunger and thirst after righteousnesse. To remember, that of the woman of Samaria, Iohn 4. 25. who when shee heard Christ speak of the waters of life sayd, Giue me Lord of this water: So O Lord, giue vs of this foode which may worke in our soules these so many and so worthy effects,

The Soliloquie.

DOst thou desire to knowe (O my Soule) with what good things Christ in this holy misterie hasteth vnto thee? how he commeth loaden and enriched with so many merites and rewards? whatsoeuer he brought into the world, all those he exhibiteth in this most diuine Sacrament.

crament. He that ministreth such foode to him that fighteth, what doth hee keepe in store for him that ouercommeth? Surely, in that immortall life, in that land of promise, he wil fill thy desires with all happines, which in this wildernesse giueth thee such heauenly Manna. And what doth hee so much couet of thee (my soule) by this most noble foode, then that hee may plentifully reward thee with vnspeakable graces, Marke what hee bringeth, more I assure thee then thou canst wish or desire: Behold (saith hee, Apoc. 3. 21.) I stand at the doore and knocke: if any heare my voice, and shall open to mee the Gate, I will enter in vnto him, and sup with him.

What wilt thou doe (O my Soule) in so great abundance of all good things? Doe what thou art able, and doe it quickly: Be thou enlarged to receiue such mysteries: Make cleane the place of thy heart: prepare

the vpper roome of thy best, and best disposed deuotion. Exclude a minde beating vpon vaine and idle cogitations: exclude an entrance to euill desires: yeelde acceptable passage to the Bridegroome Christ Iesus, to whom bee praise for euer and euer. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

A Dialogue betweene *MAN*, and his Soule.

Man.

IT is true (my Soule) that this heauenly food doth bring with it many great and excellent effects to the liuing: but tell me, what doth it profite one dead?

Soule. Nothing.

Man. Then will not this Sacrament do thee any good, if thou be dead.

Soule. But how can I die being immortall?

Man. It is true, thou canst not be extinguished with bodily death like beasts without reason, but thou maist die well enough with spirituall death, which is by a separation of Gods grace from thee: for as the death of the body consisteth in the separation of the

soule from the body: so thy death, by thy separation from Christ

Soule. Doth the grace of God giue life to the soule?

Man. Yea, euen as the soule giueth life vnto the body.

Soule. But who can depriue the soule of grace, which is the life thereof?

Man. Sin: as the Prophet Ezechiel saith, 18. 6. That Soule that sinneth shal die, that is, shal be depriued of grace: & which is more, of future glory.

Soule. From whence hath sinne that power.

Man. From Gods iust decree: & the very nature of sinne, which is an offece done to God, a staine that soyleth man, and that which obligeth man to a punishment.

Soule. Well, seeing sinne is so dangerous, I will not continue in the actions thereof any more.

Man. Surely, then shalt thou be happy in the end, & we shalbe blessed partakers together, of christs inestimable benefits, both in this world and in the world to come.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the principall cauſes which may mooue vs to come to this holy Sacrament.

Conſideration of the obediēce weal owe vnto the Author of this ſacred inſtitution, who in the ordaining thereof had no other end but the glory of God his Father, & mans true & perfect good. Si rem grande diſſet, 2. Kin. 5. had hee bad vs doe ſome great thing ſhoulde we not haue done it?

A conſideration had on our behalfe of our own weakenes, who ſtand in need of ſo many aſſiſtant helpes as wee doe, cannot but mooue vs to vſe with all reuerence & deſire, with al our hearts affection, this holy meane of receiuing grace, left vnto vs by the giuer of grace. For wee doe not

celebrate a remembrance only of some thing past, but we are partakers also of grace present, which grace though not from, ex opere operato, by that worke done, yet by the Sacrament (as water from the Fountaine by the Conduit pipes) is conueyed and deriued vnto vs: That wee offer vnto God the sacrifice of laud & praise, giue testimony vnto men, wee are members of that mysticall body whereof Christ is the head, shewe euidently vnto the worlde how desirous wee are to continue in that holy vnion with God and man: the onely celebration of this most holy sacrament doth well declare and shew, & the sundry and manifold effects thereof, do giue sufficient testimonie in the behalfe of all faithfull receiuers.

The sixth Meditation.

COnsider that the vnion of the body and soule is neere, but

but the vnion of Christ and the faithfull neerer, that separable, this inseparable.

2 Consider that this most diuine Sacrament is ordained by Christ our Sauiour, as a most gracious meane to deriue his grace vnto vs, to preserue vs from euill, and also spiritually to sustaine & nourish our soules vnto life euerlasting.

3 Consider he hath left vnto vs this mystery, that by the benefite thereof we might be transformed into him, by liuing according to his will, which is no other thing then God to liue in vs.

4 Consider how much it concerneth vs to returne careful dutie vnto Christ, to exercise religious actions of Christian pietie, to offer God the sacrifice of thankesgiuing for the inestimable benefite of our Redemption, to obserue and keepe with all reuerence this high and holy ordinance left vnto vs by his Sonne and our onely Sauiour and Redeemer: so be it.

The Fruite.

The fruit of this Meditation, is to apply our diligence in the performing of this excellent part of Gods seruice, and to remember that which was said to Moses: Doe according to the example which I shewed thee in the Mount, Exod. 25.6.

The Soliloquie.

Thou art too louing (O my Sauiour) it had beene sufficient to procure some remedy for vs of thy Creatures, and we had taken it in great fauour, but it was not sufficient for thy burning loue, but thou wouldest bee thy selfe a remedy for our soules, that the saying of the Wiseman, Eccle. 6.4. might be accomplished in thee: A faithfull friend is the medicine of life and immortality. What friend more faithfull then

then my blessed Sauiour? What medicine of more efficacie then this diuine Sacrament? But that thou wouldest that the effect thereof shoulde in part depend of vs, that was an argument of loue indeede.

If bodily Medicines shoulde worke according to the entent and desire of the sicke: it would be verie acceptable, and all sicke folkes would thinke themselues bound to the Authors thereof: how much more are wee beholding to thee, who with so great loue hast prouided for vs a medicine of such efficacie, and so wholesome, that doth worke more of it selfe, then we can desire?

How much, O Lorde, doe the lawes of humane Philosophie, differ from the lawes of thy loue? What Philosopher of the world hath euer written or thought, that a King of all Maiesty, the infinite sea of all perfectnesse, would leaue himselfe for foode vnto his owne creature? What wisedome

of

of this world had euer beene able to conceiue that God, the King of al glory, to the intent he might couple and vnite man vnto himselfe, would be willing to become his meate? O my soule, stand amazed at the loue of thy sauiour: make an end of teares, bewayle not any longer thine owne vilenesse and weakenesse, for thyne louing sisters and aduocates haue pleaded thy cause, and found fauour. Mercy hath presented thy infirmity and found grace: Wisedome hath inuented the meanes to obtaine helpe: Loue hath constrained Christ to put it in execution. This is the meane that Iesus by the meane of this most powerfull Sacrament would vnite thee vnto himselfe, that thou mightest be made one with him, and to this end thou dost receiue him.

Wee giue thee thanks O heauenly Adam, which hast restored that which the earthly Adam had destroyed. He by his meate, caused vs to depart from God and

and thou by thy meate to be vnited to God: I pray thee my louing Iesus, that this vnion may be firme and sound, that neither life nor death, may separate vs from thee. Cause vs, O Lord, that we may bee wholy ioyned to thee, that wee may glory with the Apostle, and say, Galath. 2. 21. Wee liue, but now not wee, but Christ liueth in vs. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of frequenting or receiuing often the Holie Communion.

IT hath beene shewed, that the holy Euchariſt is the ſuſtenance of the ſoule, as bread and wine are of the body: but the ſoul being of farre more excellencie then the body, it were then moſt vnſeemely, that the body, which is tranſitory, ſhould be often and carefully fed: and the ſcule which is according to the Image of God ſhould be neglected and little reſpected. Meate, vnleſſe it be taken in due ſeaſon, doth not profit the receiuer: Treaſure that is not imployed, doth turne vs to

no benefite. The vse therefore, and frequent vse of this heauenly repast is behouefull: we haue no more speciall meanes to refine our infirmities, to procure more light, & strength, to know, and ouercome all temptations, to passe ouer this life with more peace and spirituall comfort, to be at our death, more assisted with heauenly consolation, then by often participating the holy Eucharist.

There are (sayth one) three things amongst the rest, which doe alwayes holde men bound to God: The first is, the multitude of his benefites, for which wee ought to giue thankes: the second is, the multitude of our sinnes, for which wee ought to aske mercy. The third is, the multitude of miseries and infirmities, for which we are bound to seeke a remedy: Now, for the acknowledgement of our dutie, the blotting out our offences, the releefe of our miseries, there is at once no more strong and forci-

ble

ble a meane, then the frequent vse of this most holy Sacrament, wherein wee offer praise vpon the Altar of our harts, beg remission of our sinns in his merites who dyed for vs, receiue strength against all distresses of this troublesome world. Wherefore man which oweth so great and many things for benefits receiued, which so often laboureth vnder the burthen of his sinnes, whom so many necessities doe enuiron, what better course then often to approach vnto this diuine mystery? which is, saith S. Bernard, Physicke to the sicke: the way to the traueller: strength to the weake: ioy to the whole: a refuge to the poore: counsell to the rich: helpe to them that are in danger: nay heauenly comfort to the departing soule in the last agony.

It is the manner of Merchants, to frequent those places where greater hope of gaine groweth, the poore are wont to flock thither, where larger almes are giuen:

giuen: and should not the Christian repaire where great and gainefull giftes are distributed, when he findeth himselfe in misery, poore and distressed?

The loue of God may moue & inuite some: the beholding of their owne miseries should vrge others: some the conscience of sin should induce: others, a desire of obtaining grace: but the honour we all owe vnto God, should solicite all, seeing wee haue not a more high and excellent meanes of performing the same.

One friend doth willingly come vnto another: it is a signe of smal loue to Christ when wee come so seldome to his holy Passe-ouer: as on the contrary, his loue is augmented more and more in vs, by oftē communicating. A great and louing remembrance of his blessed passion we celebrate in the frequent participation of this holy mystery: So often (saith the Apostle, 1. Cor. 11. 26. And therefore often) you shewe the Lordes death vntill hee come.

Last

Last of all, we see in Winter, when the sun is farthest off, barrennesse followeth: in the coldnesse of our deuotion, when this mysterie is neglected, what ensueth but colde loue to God and man, yea and vnaptnesse to all pietie.

The seuenth Meditation.

COnsider that in the primitiue Church, which was gouerned of the Apostles themselues, the Christians often communicated which did shew that great deuotion and feruentnesse of spirit did possesse the mindes of men: and euident it is, that by how much the more that godly custome did waxe more colde, by so much the feruentnesse and holinesse of Christian people did waxe lesse and lesse.

2 Consider that by often communicating, piety and perfection of life is augmented, the Christian man is made more religious: the

the body made chaste and obedient to the soule, the soule to God.

3 Consider that to receiue Christ in the Sacrament, with due preparation, is no other thing then to worship him with great reuerence: hee therefore, which by this diuine communicating, doth often receiue him, worship him with diuine honor: but hee which honoureth Christ on earth, shall be likewise honored of his heauenly Father in heauen, Luke 9. 26.

4 Consider seeing this diuine Sacrament is the meate of the soule, wherewith it is strengthened and maintained in a spirituall life, it doth manifestly follow, by how much the more often the soule is nourished with this meat, by so much the perfecter it is made in a life spirituall.

5 Consider, saith S. Bernard Ser. de Cæna Dominica, if any do not so often feele so great motiõs of anger, enuy, carnality, let him think that by often cõmunicating God makes sound the corruptiõ of our nature The

The Fruite.

The fruit of this meditation, is, to make a firme purpose of applying our selues to this frequent and often communicating, to beseech the Lorde, that the soule may neuer loath this heauenly foode; but with an inward affection desire it: from which affection, springeth perseuerance, and a readinesse to sanctimonie and holines of life, with a longing to walke before the Lord in brightnesse: and that holy hunger and thirst after righteousnesse, which makes the godly blessed, Math. 5.6.

The

The Soliloquie.

What grace is this (O sweet Jesu) which thou doest affect me with? for thou not only vouchsafest to open vnto me the precious Mine of gold, lying in the fielde of the holy Church, that is, the hidden treasure: for which the man that found it, sold all that he had, to buy that field: but also doest often inuite me to digge for so precious a treasure, that thou maiest enrich my soule. But that which draweth me into admiration is, that to the purchasing of this field, and digging this treasure, as often as I will, thou hast added so great a commoditie, that I neede not sell any of my goodes, much lesse all that I haue.

Lord, if to obtaine this treasure thou hadst ordayned harde fasts, long Pilgrimages, shedding

ding of bloud, & other sharp pennances: all these labours and afflictions ought worthily to haue beene suffered to taste euen but once thy sacred body: but, O loue vnheard of: that hadst rather make the entrance easie and delectable, that I might often returne to this Wine. O Adam: how much better is the condition of thy posteritie, then was thine, which is nowe brought to passe by the meanes of our louing and liberall Iesus? Thou wert driuen out of Paradise, and that thou shouldst not returne thither to eate of the Tree of Life & liue, one of the Cherubims armed w a fiery sword, was set of the righteous God to keepe it: wee thy children, liuing in the Paradice of thy holy Church, are not only not driuen away by an Angell, with a fiery sword, but are inuited of the Lord of Angels, by the fire of his loue, to taste often the fruits of the tree of life: yea to receiue him, who hath giuen all strength to the tree of life, that giueth

giueth vs a blessed and euerlasting life: for so he inuiting vs hath promised: Hee which eateth of this bread shall liue for euer, Iohn 6,58.

O my soule, be somewhat stirred vp, and magnifie thy GOD: for he which is mighty hath done great things for thee: Dost thou not see him, that hee is made thy treasure to make thee rich? Returne often to digge it: it is a precious treasure, and therefore it will satisfie thy desires: it is infinite, and therefore will neuer decay, or be made emptie.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of the impediments which detaine men from the blessed Sacrament.

IN the second of Exodus & the 6. Pharao to withholde the people of God from doing Sacrifice causeth his Taske-maisters to set them about drudgery.

It is the wilinesse of the olde serpent, to draw vs from performing this holy seruice vnto God, to make the world and the flesh distract our thoughts & desires, so to keepe vs from this spirituall part of Gods worship, either by a remisse & careleese neglect, or at least, by a timorous conceit of our vnworthinesse to approach vnto

vnto the table of our Lord.

This careleſſe and remiſſe neg-lect ariſeth of our many incum-bhances and buſineſſes in the world. We can finde time to fol-low profits and pleaſures: but to enter into this ſo ſerious buſineſſe of our ſoule, we are not at leiſure.

Esau, to ſatisfie his appetite, ſelleth his Patrimony: the Gerge-ſems reſpecting their ſwine neg-lected Chriſts heauenly preſence. What great indignity was offe-red vnto the rich man, Luke 14. 16. who prepared a great ſupper, ſent his ſeruantes to call them that were bidden for to come in, when the vnthankeful gueſts re-turned anſwer, they were other-wiſe imployed: indeede they ca-red not for comming.

If feare keepe any away, be-cauſe it may ſeeme preſumption to approach vnto ſo holy a place as the Altar of the Lord, let it be remembred, Chriſt calleth all that be wearie and heauie laden, pro-miſing all to refreſh them. Matt.

11. 28.

If sloath and negligence let a carefulnes of our estate to come stir vs vp. If the affaires of the worlde in the worke of our redēptiou, cast them all aside. Did Christ our Sauiour carelesly perfoime the worke of our Redemption, No verily? and shall we carelesely regard this his seruice? Multa dixit, hee sayd many things, Multa fecit, he did many things, Multa pertulit he suffered many thinges: and should wee either say, or doe, or suffer little or nothing at all in his seruice: God forbid?

If any finde himselfe colde and slow without desire and deuotion towards this heauenly meate, he ought not therefore to abstaine from the holy Communion: for he shal here finde sensible deuotion, when all the powers of the soule, and dispersed appetites are gathered together, when our will and strength is forcibly caried to God, and we meruailously moued to honour the passion of our blessed

blessed Sauiour.

The impediments therefore considered, wee may indeuour then to auoide them, that so wee may come and offer our soules & bodies a sacrifice to GOD, that neither by the subtleneſſe of Sathan, the affaires of this world, the pleasures of the flesh, wee be drawne away from so high and heauenly a repast prepared for vs as is this great mystery of mans Saluation.

The eight Meditation.

CONsider that the deuill cannot endure the vse of this profitable Sacrament: for he knoweth how much it is of force to attaine blessednesse from whence he for his pride fell. And hee hateth the Sacrament for in it, is represented our Sauiours Passion, by force wherof, he is bound

& thrust from the tyranny which he would exercise vpon mankind

2. Consider for what causes the deuil doth labor by diuers means and Arts to withdraw men from often communicating, whence wee may gather how profitable this holy Sacrament is to the soule, when it is manifest, it so much displeaseth sathan, the capitall enemie of our good.

3. Consider that our nature is of it selfe prone to euill, and how the allurements of the flesh, the affaires of the world, are readie to carry vs away from Gods worship: and therfore by so much the more, wee should the rather shake off all impediments, & receiue this holy Eucharist, where by wee are strengthened to resist temptations, vnited vnto Christ and armed with his grace, which shall protect and saue vs.

4 Consider that whereas this Sacrament is numbred amongest the greatest benefites giuen to vs of God in this life, that we do in nothing more auoid the tokens

dens of vngratefulnesse, then by often communicating: besides it is most acceptable vnto God: the memory also of Christ, is heere renewed, which hee also willeth to be done, saying: Doe this in remembrance of me.

5. Consider how the intermission of this holy institution: doth make men (in time) lesse religious: how it proceedeth, for the most part, of want of Loue: for, it cannot be, that one should loue Christ, and yet neglect this his holy ordinance.

The Fruite.

The fruit of this Meditation is, first, to begge of the Lord, an inward affection and deuotion to the holy Sacrament: next, strength against the temptations and allurements which are ready to withdraw vs from the same.

The Soliloquie.

BEhold now (O good Iesus) by how many meanes my infernal enemy indeuoureth to draw me away from thy heauenly Table: at one time he assaileth mee in the faith of this most holy and hidden Sacrament: at another time, hee tortureth me with scruples, very often hee striueth to pul me backs for many humane respects, and that hee may effect his purpose, he laboreth that the world may withdraw me by the affaires thereof: and that the flesh should complaine, her repentance and turning vnto God is grieuous vnto her. O my soule, if there were not an inestimable benefit receiued by this holy sacrament, the deuill would not be troublesome vnto vs: yea, hee would reioice in the timemispent herein: But the enemy of man is not ignorant of the great good that heereby commeth to man.

Now beholde O Lord the assaults

saults of this aduersarie of our soules, I desire no other thing of thee, then that thy seruant Iob desired & obtained. Iob 19.3 Place me by thee, and let the hand of whō soeuer fight against me: stand on my part, O Lord, and I shalbe safe.

None shal stay me frō frequenting this heauenly Sacrament: I pray thee therefore, my mercifull Iesus, that like as thou hast inspired me of thy merciful goodnesse, that I might beg the taste of this precious meate: so thou maiest bestow on me grace to frequent the same with ioyfull perseuerance. Cause (O Lord) that the memorie & desire of this holy Sacrament fal not frō me: otherwise I know that my heart will wax faint, and I shalbe constrained to say with the Prophet, My heart is withered within me, that I forget to eate my bread. Let not the distrust of mine own vilenes deterre and fray me from such a heauenly meat, so ful of comfort: to which humble desire, Lorde giue thy blessed grant: Amen.

The Ninth Meditation.

That to abstaine from the Sacrament without iust cause, is an impediment vnto our spiritual profit

MAny ther are in the world who vpon carelesnesse and negligence, are not willing for to giue ouer worldly busines or to take pains to prepare themselues to this speciall part of the seruice of God, abstaine from the holy sacrament. Others complaine, they want sensible deuotion, and so not finding themselues so fitte as they would wish themselues, giue ouer to approach vnto this holy mystery. A third sort, pretend they are not: and cannot bee in perfect charity. A miserable case it is, that men should for meane and transitory thinges neglect heauenly: nay, that which is most

most lamentable that they should in a manner, studie to perswade themselues there is no God, because they would take no paines to serue him: neglecting all religious duties, and almost willing their soules should bee like the soules of beasts, mortal and corruptible: that they should bee so blinde as to hurt themselues because their enemies hurt them?

To worke the beginning of a better alteration in these mens mindes: let them consider whose creatures they are: why God hath sent them hither, what hee will require of them when they are departed hence.

Now for humane respectes to neglect any longer our seruices due vnto God (amongst which, this of the Sacrament is so excellent) it is a great indignitie, where God himselfe is a party.

Who would care for the course diet of Egypt, that may haue Manna from heauen? who wold loosely or carelesly omit this seruice of GOD, that remembers

whose creature he is? We should be carefull, not so much what we now do, as what one day we may wish we had done.

As for those, who vpon an opinion of their owne vnfitnes or vnworthinesse, think themselues not well prepared to approch vnto this holy Communion, or rather for that they haue no spirituall hunger, they are dul or lumpish, hauing no desire to communicate: they haue no feruor or deuotion, but are dry and cold: they imagine if they should communicate, they should feele no spirituall taste after they haue receiued, or alacritie to good workes: when any find these wants and defects in themselues, as many doe, they ought to cõsider what they ought to doe, for feare of further peril: they should not bee discouraged, but remember to serue God not onely in prosperity, that is, when hee sends them ioyfull and gladsome motions: but also in times of aduersitie, or when hee sends them sorrowfull: let them know, that

that voluntarie want of feruor, which commeth of negligence, is the default, and not that which sometimes feeleth not sensible Deuotion: to haue desire and good will, to serue God in this coldnesse, is much acceptable, and sheweth that fidelitie and loyaltie wee owe to GOD. For scruples of not being in charitie, and the like, wee ought not to abstaine from the holy Communion for euery light cause, but to call to mind, for whose sake wee are to loue our very enemies,

Be it thou art wretched and miserable and vnworthy of all good: thou oughtest not therfore to depart from this holy Table: but rather, with the more desire to flie vnto God considering hee is that Lord, who calles all that are weary and heauy laden, to the end he may refresh them: hee is the same now in heauen, that he was when he was conuersant in earth. See in the Gospell, hee neuer reiected any sinner, or distressed creature that would come

vnto

vnto him: hee reiected not anie Publican: he reiected not Marie Magdalene: hee reiected not the woman with the issue of bloude. yea we reade that the blind, the lame, and all that were diseased came vnto him, and there went vertue from him, and they were healed.

And heere wee haue to note: that to come worthily and with due reuerence vnto this holie Sacrament, may be vnderstood two manner of waies: one is conformable vnto the dignitie of the Lord, whom wee receiue, and in this sort commeth none worthilie, and with due reuerence: no though hee should bestow all his time in preparing himselfe so long as the world shall endure: another manner to come worthilie and with due reuerence, is, in respect of that, which GOD of necessitie doth require at our hands, which is, Faith, and Repentance, and iudging our selues purposing to leade a new life, and so forth. It is in our prepa-

preparing, as it is in our almes not according to that a man hath not, but according to that hee hath: in that as much as wee can, there is nothing wanting.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

A Conference betweene the Soule and Faith.

Soule.

Shall I be so bolde with Obededon, as to approach to this sacred Arke, & receiue the same into mine house?

Faith. Why maiest thou not be so bold?

Soule. For because I am weak, miserable, and ill inclined.

Faith. Hee who commeth vnto thee, is both the Physitian and the Medicine: he himselfe hath said: The whole neede not the Physitian, but the sick. He is the man in the Gospell, that makes the supper, & bids guests: vnthankfulnes were it to refuse to come.

Soule.

Soule. If Iohn the Baptist sanctified euen in his Mothers wombe, reputed himselfe vnworthie to loose the Latchet of Christes Shooes: And Saint Peter, thinking himselfe vnwoorthy of his presence, sayd: Goe from mee, O Lorde, for I am a sinfull man: howe shall I, being a miserable sinner, without the danger of eternal punishment, dare to receiue vnto mee so high a mystery?

Faith. If hee descended from heauen to saue sinners: if he call vnto him all that are weary and heauy loaden, shall he not accept of thee, if thou come vnto him being called?

Soule. What shall make mee secure of punishment?

Faith. Humilitie and Loue. By humilitie thou shalt bee exalted: by Loue thou shalt be rewarded. Come therfore vnto him by this holy meane left vnto thee.

Soule. But if the Bethshemites in the first of Sam. 6. were so sharpely punished for looking into

into the Arke, how may I presume to receiue the Lord of the Arke himselfe?

Faith. The Bethshemites were worthily punished, for that they looked into the Arke of curiosity: they did not honour and reuerence it as they ought to do. Wherefore if thou hast Humilitie and Loue, thou needest not feare the punishment of the Bethshemites.

Soule. But I cannot choose but acknowledge with the Centurion, that I am not worthy to receiue Christ vnder my roofe.

Faith. The Lord maketh them worthy who acknowledge their owne vnworthinesse. Wherefore with all humble submission say: O Lord Iesu, I come vnto thee beseeching thee to turne away thine eyes from my sins: if thou wilt behold them, behold them Lord not as a Iudge to punish them, but as a Physitian to cure them. Cause I beseech thee, that my infirmities, may happen to thy greater glory, as the infirmi-

tie

tie of him did, that was borne blind, Iohn. 9. 3. Thou deliuering me a sinner, by so much the more shal thy glory shine, by how much the more I am vnworthie and miserable.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Another Dialogue, betweene the distressed Sinner, and Faith.

Sinner.

I Am not worthy to approach vnto so high a place, as the Table of the Lord: & therefore I come so seldome as I doe.

Faith. Didst thou doe this of true humilitie, and not of negligence rather, it were well. But I doubt thou dost it of sloath, because thou wilt not take paines to repent as thou oughtest.

Sinner. The very truth is, I am afraid.

Faith. Why man? let the loue of him, that so louingly calleth thee abandon feare.

Sinner

Sinner. But I am ſtufull in my owne conſcience, conſcious to my ſelfe of ſinne.

Faith. Who can ſay his heart is cleane? all haue ſinned, and al haue gone aſtray.

Sinner. But my ſinnes are grieuous, and therfore I abſent my ſelfe.

Faith. Are they grieuous, and therefore thou ſhouldeſt rather ſeeke a remedy where it may bee had.

Sinner. But I haue not ſenſible deuotion to ſeeke.

Faith. Though we cannot be as ſtrong as Sampſon, we muſt not let all alone, Chriſt will accept a good heart.

Sinner. But I cannot ſo well diſpoſe my ſelfe yet, by reaſon of the affaires of this world.

Faith. God willeth vs by his Apoſtle S. Peter to caſt all care of earthly things vpon him, becauſe we ſhould caſt our care about heauenly.

Sinner. But may I bee ſo bolde, as to come and bee partaker

taker of so holy a mystery?

Faith. Thou maist, and therefore prepare faith and a penitent heart, and come in the name of God. Heere is the wine that makes gladd the heart of man, what better comfort, then from the comforter himselfe? comfort thy selfe therefore in God, let him bee thy onely comfort, So be it.

CHAP

CHAP. XIII.

A spirituall Complaint of the Soule.

WHat shall I doe, my sweet Iesu? for two most strong Captaines doe greatlie assault mee, that is to say. Feare and Loue: Feare obiecteth to my minde, the highnesse of this most diuine Sacrament, which doth make me draw backe my foote: but Loue sheweth mee the excellency which this admirable mystery doth procure and makes me that with pleasant desire I dare goe on and come into thy sight. O my Sauiour, what shall I doe? if ouercome with feare, I depart further frō thy holy Table, when thou hast sayd: Vnlesse ye eate the flesh of the sonne of man, you shall not haue

haue life in you.

If I be ouercome with Loue, shal I be so bold without Feare to receiue the Sacrament of so great a Maiesty? What thē shall I do (O my Sauiour?) I know well the one cannot please thee without the other: for seeing thou art our Father, Loue is worthily due vnto thee: and seeing thou art our Lorde, Feare and Reuerence.

Wherfore I determine to giue my diligence to both, to receiue both into my cōpany Loue shall cause that I come often & willingly, Feare that I come reuerently, and with diligent preparation. And thou my most gentle Redeemer, seeing thou vouchsafest to inuite mee so often to thy sacred feast, bring to passe, that these two Captaines may not forsake me. Oh my heauenly father: for that thou hast bound me with so many benefits vnto thee, and tied me with so great bonds of Loue, I beseech thee by the same Loue wherewith thou dost alwaies

alwayes prosecute thy onely begotten and beloued Sonne, that thou wilt not leaue me so bound, but rather draw me to thy sonne, seeing thou hast promised it to me by the Prophet Osea, when thou saist, I will draw them vnto me with chaines of Loue. Remember also (O my blessed Sauiour) that thou hast promised this drawing, when thou saidst: Whē I am lifted vp from the earth I wil draw all things vnto my selfe. Now O Lord, thou art exalted, it remaineth that thou draw my heart vnto thee: and when it cannot finde where it may rest, like the Doue, it may returne to the arke of saluation. But if thou O Lord, doest not stretch forth thy hand to drawe it vnto thee into the Arke, it shall stay without doores, and soone perish in the Waters: Lord Iesus receiue me in, and I shall be safe.

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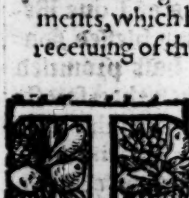
The 14. CHAP.

Of remooving dangerous impediments, which hinder the worthy receiuing of this holy Sacrament.



There is (saith the Wise man) a worde, closthed with death GOD graunt that it bee not founde in the house of Israell. And there is too (saith the Apostle) an vnworthy receiuing of Christ vnto condemnation. 1. Cor. 11. 27. And God grant it bee not found amongst the Israell of Christ. That which is to some the sauour of life vnto life, and these are the worthy Receiuers: the same may bee vnto others the sauour of death vnto death: and these are the vnworthy.

What

What is therefore more needfull then to remoue all dangerous impediments, which may hinder the fruit and efficacy of so high a mysterie, as to purge vs of the leauen of sinne and malicious nesse, of all sensuall desires, faithles cogitations, impenitent affections, and all other euils whatsoeuer, which may withdraw the heart of man from God, and hinder the good effect of this most excellent medicine of our soules?

The Sunne to them which are in health is pleasant and wholesome, but vnto those who are pained in the head, it falleth out to be far otherwise. A potion receiued in due season, doth helpe the Patient. The showers and dewes of heauen make the tree well planted to prosper, & fructifie: but that tree which hath some worme at the roote, & doth wither vpward, doth more and more decay for all this moysture. The soule rooted in faith & charity is a good Plant, whom this heauenly dew doth nourish: a cor-

rupt conscience is that Worme which maketh the withered tree to fade away so long, vntill the Master of the vineyard say, Cut downe the vnprofitable Tree, why cumbreth it the ground? Now therefore, that the faithfull Christian may be as the Tree planted by the waters side, Psal. 1. which shall bring foorth his fruit in due season, let him in the name of God remoue all dangerous impediments, as enuy, euil concupiscence, infidelitie, and the like: that hee eate not of this Bread, and drinke not of this Cup of the Lord vnworthily.

The tenth Meditation.

COnsider that the olde Israelites did not receiue Manna, so long as there remained in their houses the leauen of Egypt: so, so long as sinfull desires remaine in our hearts, wee receiue not

not as we ought to receiue our heauenly Manna.

2 Consider that to come vnworthily to the holy Eucharist, as without faith, without deuotion, without repentance, without reuerence is very dangerous.

3 Consider how respectiue we should be in comming to this holy mysterie, how carefull, how religious.

4 Salomon saith, When thou sittest to eate with a Ruler, consider diligently what is set before thee, Pro. 23. 1.

5 Abraham when hee was making his Offering to God, Gen. 15. 11. the Fowles came to hinder Abrahams Offering, as wandering thoughts would doe ours: Abraham arose and droue them away.

6 In the first of Samuel 21. Ahimelech asked Dauid if his men were cleansed before they were permitted to eate of the shew bread.

7 God said to Moses, Put of thy shoes, for the place where

thou standest is holy ground. Exod 3. 5.

The Fruite.

THe fruit of this Meditation is to prepare our selues in the best and most reuerent manner we can, that we eate not Panem Domini contra Dominum, the bread of the Lord against the Lord, as S. Austen speaketh, to remoue all dangerous impediments, to be sorry for our sinnes past, and resolue vpon amendment for the time to come.

The Soliloquie.

SEest thou not my soule, that it is thy part to come with all deuotion and attention of minde vnto this holy Sacrament? Remēber that when God Exod. 19. 1. 3. was to talke with Moses

Moses vpon the Mount: he wil commanded, that neither man nor beast should approach to the Mountaine, least Moses by the sight of any Creature should bee disturbed: yea, that hee should haue fitter opportunity of attention, without distraction, the whole hill was couered with a great and darke cloud, the multitude were commanded to sanctifie thēselues, yea, to wash their very cloaths.

No otherwise (my soule) doe thou, that no euill affection come with thee vnto the holy Altar, which may draw thee from Deuotion: heere God doth expect thee. Consider with thy selfe, that hee can neuer bee truely desired and loued of thee, vnlesse in comming to this sacred Table, thou cleane forget all earthly things. Heare what the Kingly Prophet saith, Psalme. 45. 11. My daughter, hearken and consider, incline thine eare: Forget also thine owne people, and thy Fathers house, so shall the King haue plea-

sure in thy beautie, for he is thy Lord God, and worship thou him. But (O Lord) what shall I doe to attaine this Deuotion? For my minde doth remaine so corrupt, since that generall fall of our first father Adam, that oftentimes against my will, it wandereth vagrant where it shoulde not: what shall I doe, when my infernall enemy either indeuoureth by many earthly occasions, to draw me away from this heauenly Table, or to come (which is no lesse fearefull) vnworthily vnto the same. Thou seest (O merciful Iesus, in what state I stand, that is to say, how weake I am by nature, helpe I beseech thee, my weaknesse with thy holy grace, that all defects removed I may approach vnto thy heauenly table, with heart and soule prepared.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of preparing our selues before we come to the most holy Sacrament.

If in our earthly affaires wee oftentimes forget heauenly, good reason it is that in our heauenly, we should much rather forget all earthly busines whatsoeuer, and prepare our selues to this so solemne a seruice, which doth consecrate man vnto God.

Christ sent two of his Disciples before, to make readie the vpper roome, where he would keepe his Maundie with his Apostles: our Faith and Repentance, as two messengers, must prepare before, the vpper roome of our soules.

When God appeared vnto his Seruant Moses in the bush, hee

willed him to put off his shoes, because the place was holy. The place where thou standest (sayth he) is holy ground, Exod. 3. 5.

The Israelites keeping their Passe-over, put leauen out of their houses. Christ washeth his Disciples feete when he did eate with them, or they with him: say S. Peter what he will, we haue need to be washed. The Prophet Dauid saith, I will wash my hands in innocencie, and so will goe to thy Altar. Psal. 26. 6. Hester comming to find grace and fauour in the sight of Ahashueroth, first humbleth her selfe by fasting and prayer. Iacob comming for a blessing, putteth on Esaus garment. Wee are approaching to the Lords Altar, we are comming for a blessing: seeking fauour, what should we do else but wash our hearts by Faith in the bloud of the Lamb, humble our soules, take vnto vs the garment of Christs righteousnesse?

Againe, it behoueth euery one that will safely come to this Table,

ble, to direct all his affections and desires to God onely, to do nothing, to affect nothing, but Gods pleasure respected.

For him that will rightly bee partaker of this holy mysterie: first, Faith is necessary, whereby he beleeueth remission of his sins in Christs merites.

2 Secondarily, repentance is necessarie, whereby hee acknowledgeth the greatnesse of his sinne, iudgeth himselfe: and iudging himselfe, he shall not be iudged of God.

3 Thirdly, Charitie is required, whereby the minde is at peace and quiet with men: and he that dwelleth in charity (saith S. Iohn) dwelleth in God, and God in him: dwelleth in God, what more secure? and God in him, what more sweet?

4 Fourthly, attention must be had, that he bee not carried away from respective deuotion: and chiefely from the meditation of Christs passion, his resurrection the third day, his descension

into hell, his ascention vp into heauen, his glorious sitting at the right hand of GOD, from whence he shall come at the end of the world, to iudge both the quicke and dead.

5 Fiftly, Fasting is necessary whereby the Prophet Dauid humbled his soule, Psal. 35. 13. Hester by fasting disposed her selfe to God, and found grace in the sight of Assuerus, Hester 4. 16.

The eleuenth Meditation.

COnsider how busie and careful Martha was (Luk. 10. 40.) to receiue Christ into her house, and therefore much more careful should euery one bee to receiue him into his heart.

2 Consider what reuerence and deuotion is meete by that the Prophet spoken of Christs entrance into heauen: Be ye lifted vp ye euerlasting Gates, and the King

King of glory shall come in, Psal. 24. 6.

3 Consider that to entertaine an earthly Prince all things are made decent and cleane.

4 Consider it was saide to him that came to the marriage feast after an vnseemely manner: Friend, how camest thou in hither, and hast not on a wedding Garment? Mat. 22. 12.

5 Consider how the Apostle Saint Peter when Christ would wash his feete, thought himselfe vnworthy that so great honour should be done vnto him.

The fruits of this Meditation.

THe first is, to prepare vs with all humble reuerence, but chiefly to offer vnto God the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, that as his body was broken for vs, so should our hearts be broken.

2 The

2. The second is, to crie out with the Prophet: Cre in me Domine, novum cor: Create in mee, O Lord, a new heart.

3. The third is, to become surueighers of our selues: and call a little consistory in our owne soules.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

A forme of confessing our sinnes, before we come to receiue the most holy Sacrament.

Lord, thou art not wont to driue away sinners, but callest them, and conuertest them to thee: Thou art he that hast said, Matthew 11. 26. Come all that are wearie and heauie loaden. It was publiquely spoken of thee, that thou diddest receiue Publicans and Sinners and didst eat with them. O my Lord thou art nowe at the throne of mercie, and therefore hast not changed thy nature, which thou hadst sometimes here in the world. O my Lord, thou still callest them from heauen, whom thou didst

didst once call on earth: wherfore comforted with this remẽbrance of thy loue, I come vnto thee loaden, and labouring, and burdened with my sinnes. I come as the sicke to the Physitian, beseeching thee to heale mee: as a sinner to the well-spring of righteousnes: beseeching thee to iustifie me. I acknowledge, I acknowledge my great vnworthynesse.

If thine owne holy Apostle or as hee seemed, Prince of the Apostles, could cry out and say: Goe from me (O Lord) for I am a sinfull man: how much more shall I, who am an vnhallowed creature, and Prince of sinners, say, I am not worthie to whom thou shouldest come: Nay, I am not worthie to come vnto thee, much lesse to receiue thee?

It was lawfull for none to taste of the Shew-bread, which was onely a shadow of this profound mysterie, but onely for him who was cleane and sanctified: how shall I eate thereof, who

who am so farre remooued from cleannesse?

It was so great an offence to touch thy sacred Arke, that Vzzah stretching out his hand to touch it (2 Kings 6.7.) was sodainly stricken: how can I not but feare and tremble in this case?

O Lord, as I feare thy greatnesse, so do I also feare the multitude of my sinnes. I am that foole, Psal. 14. that said in his heart, There is no God. I liued so dissolutely, as (by my manners I professed as much) I feared not thy iustice, I dreaded not to transgresse thy Lawes, I rendred not Thankes as I ought: What other thing hath my life beene, then a daily warre against thee? What other thing haue I done by my sinnes, and careless comming vnto this Mysterie in former times, then offered thee open wrong, stricken thy blessed Head with a Reede? My sinnes haue beene the Speare that geared thee: the Thornes that

that pierced thee: how therefore shall I be so bold as to come vnto thee? Shall I repose thy sacred body in a den of Dragons, a nest of Scorpions? what other thing is a soule full of sinne? wherefore dost thou cast thy childrens bread vnto dogges, and thy precious Margarite to Swine? How wilt thou rest with me (O my Lord) which art the purine of a Virgin, the fountaine of all pulchritude? Thy most holy bodie taken from the Crosse, was wrapped in fine linnen, laid in a new Sepulcher, wherein neuer any was laide, but what part of my soule is cleane? What new? How then shall I receiue thee, (O my Sauiour and redeemer?) I am ashamed so often as I beholde my selfe in such a state: I blush, considering what I am, & whither I am about to come. My refuge is, to flie vnto thy mercie, according to which mercie, O Lord, looke vpon me. Did the stones cleaue asunder, when thou sufferedst thy Pas-

on,

on, and shall my stonie heart bee nothing moued, for whom thou diddest suffer? Did the Earth moue, and shall my earthly mind stand vnmoueable, like a dead center? No, no: I am moued, O my Sautour.

Another Forme of Confession.

TAke it not heynouslie (O my Lorde) that being such a one as thou seest mee to bee, I dare presume to come into thy sight: I remember, thou wast not offended with the poore Woman, which had the issue of bloud, (Matthew Chapter 9.) but diddest accept of her, saying: Bee of good comfort Daughter, thy Faith hath made thee whole. I haue a greater issue, and come to thee to thee to be cured.

I

I call to minde Mary Magdalene, who washed thy feete with her teares, and wiped them with the haire of her head. Beholde, heere lyeth a Sinner, which hath more sinnes, but fewer teares: shee was not the first nor the last whom thy mercy receiued: Receiue me (O Lord) though I haue not shed so many Teares as may washe thy Feete, yet hast thou shedde as much bloud as can wash away my sinnes. O my Lord thou hast not changed thy office and nature, though thou seemest to be farre away.

I reade in the holy Gospell, that all that were sicke and diseased did resort vnto thee; and that the multitude (in the 6. Chapter of Luke, and verse 19) sought to touch thee: for there went Vertue from thee. The Leapers came vnto thee, and thou stretching forth thy blessed hands diddest heale them: thou gauest vnto the blind their sight, vnto the Lame their Limbes.

Thou

Thou diddest cure the sicke, dispossesse the deuill, raise the dead, and canst thou now forget to shew mercie, which art mercie it selfe? I come vnto thee, O my Redeemer: I come vnto thee: O eternall Creator of heauen and earth: beseeching thee, that as the holy King Dauid did accept at his Table, and shew fauour vnto Meiphibosheth, 2 Sam. 9. 11. though of himselfe deformed: yet for the loue of Ionathan, of whom hee was descended: willing thereby to honour the sonne for the Fathers sake. So may it please thee, to admit me, though of my selfe most deformed in the loue of him, in whom thou art well pleased.

I offer vnto thee (O Lord) an humble heart: and had I many hearts, I would offer them all vnto thee. Lord, I can be no more without thee, nor liue without thee then can this bodie of mine remaine, when life is taken from it. Wherefore, necessitie driueth mee vnto thee, and

and hope of Mercie ministreth boldnesse: by how much the more vnworthie I am, by so much the more art thou glorified in shewing mercie to mee thy poore and vnworthie seruant.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

A Meditation vpon these words:

Whence commeth this, that my Lord commeth vnto me.

HEe bringeth himselfe, that sendeth not another: hee which hath so many spirits his ministers, commeth himselfe vnto his seruants, hee visiteth his sicke, lifteth vp and comforteth the fallen, helpeth the afflicted, refresheth the hungrie with his owne bodie and bloud, who aboundeth with so many, so diuers meanes and medicines, as to whom the fulnes of the whole earth doth appertaine. Hee bringeth himselfe vnto thee (O my soule) as a father, when hee pro-

secu-

secuteth thee with loue: as a bro-
ther, when he maketh thee by a-
doption the sonne of God: as a
fellow, when he appointeth thee
a Co-heire of his heauenly king-
dome, as a heauenly repast for
thy eternall comfort: as an In-
tercessor for the remission of thy
sinnes. O the wonderfull loue of
the Sonne of God: Vnde venit
from whence commeth this, that
my Lord commeth vnto me?

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

A Meditation vpon these words of the Centurion.

Mat. 8. 8.

Non sum dignus vt intres sub tectum meum.

Lord, I am not worthie that thou enter vnder my roofe.

Lord haddest thou rather be at another mans house with dishonor then at thine own with honour? at least (O good Jesu) if thou hadst no respect of thine honour: if thou castest vnderfoot all prayse and renowne, if thou takest vnto thee euery vile sinner, yet haue regard to thy estate? Lord, I confesse, I am not

not worthy that thou shouldest come vnder my roofe: Thou knowest my pouertie and need: I haue this poore cottage farre vnmeete to entertaine so great a guest as thou, O my Lord. This body is not compact of gold and Siluer, but of dust and ashes: and also subiect to infirmities, diseases, and death. This Soule ioyned to my body is farre from that holinesse it should be indued withall, farre vnmeete a place it is for such a personage. I am altogether confounded, I tremble and shake at the comming of so great a Guest into so poore a house, as my soule is.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

A Meditation vpon these words:

Tantum dic verbum & sanabitur anima mea.

But onely say the word, and my Soule shall liue.

AND art thou ignorant (O my Lord) who thou art? what a one and how great? Thou art God omnipotent, thou Lord of all, thou art the Creator of heauen and earth, and whatsoeuer is contained in the vast compasse thereof: thou hast raised me vp, as all other things els of nothing: thou hast clothed me with this bodie, and hast giuen me in

mans creation a right and righteous soule: thou hast restored this soule saine from the state of innocencie: thou hast illuminated it by grace, and washed it in the sacred Font of Baptisme. O my Lord, thou art hee that rulest and gouernest mee: thou wouldest for my sake become man, die for me, suffer for me the very death of the crosse: so much could loue and Charitie preuaile with thee: Lord, thy Grace is sufficient. And wilt thou turne then into my house to refresh my faint Soule, to cure mee being weake, and heale me being sick? Will not thy onely word suffice, wherwith thou hast cleansed the Leapers, dispossessed the deuils, raysed the dead? It will suffice O my Lord: Dic verbum, & sanabitur anima mea, say the word, and my soule shall be healed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

A Meditation vpon theſe words:

Matth. 8. 7.

Veniam & curabo eum.

I will come and cure him.

IF it pleaſe thee ſo, neither will thou haue it otherwiſe, behold thy ſeruant, bee it vnto mee according vnto thy word. Come down Lord Ieſu, or euer my ſoule dieth. Now a way lieth open vnto thee, O my ſoule, I will ſhew thee great ioy, reioyce, & be glad, for thy Creator commeth vnto thee: thy Sauiour commeth vnto thee, who hath fought with thy enemies, ſuſtained wounds, ſpent his life for

thee: behold how hee desireth to enlarge thee with the most ample gift of his most blessed Diuinitie. Where wilt thou lay vp these things my soule? how great is he to whom the thrones and dominions serue, on whom the holy host of heauen doth attend?

O my soule, admire the wonderfull piety, and ineffable dignitie, wherewith hee hasteth to visite thee, and maketh speede to come vnto thee: but arise, runne forth to meete him, hasten this meeting, reioyce and congratulate for the comming of such a guest: cry with a deuout heart: Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindfull of him? Psalme 8. 1. And say with the same Prophet: Who am I that thou hast brought me to this? 2 Sam. 7. 18.

The

The Soliloquie.

LOrd, how much doest thou submit thy selfe, while thou doest not disdaine to enter into the vile cottage of my soule? It was sufficient for thy loue, to be borne for me in a stable. That thou descendedst from heauen to rest in the wombe of the blessed Virgin, was not such a maruell, for that it was the wombe of a most pure creature. O holy Elizabeth, who being visited and saluted by the mother of this Lord, considering the dignitie of this Maiestie didst say, Whence commeth this vnto mee, that the Mother of my Lord commeth to me? Therefore what shall I say, to whom the Lorde himselfe commeth, by infinite parts far aboue the Virgin Mary? hee commeth vnto mee, not onely to visite mee, but also to vnite mee to him, and inrich me with heauenly gifts. O my Soule,

I greatly reioyce, that thou hast deliuered to Iesus of thine owne will, the gouernment and possession of thy selfe: but vnderstand that by this act thou art bound to proclaime open warre to all sinnes, the capitall enemies of thy Lord to whom thou art deliuered: neither canst thou any more, without manifest offence of rebellion, giue an entrance of sinne into thine house, now dedicated vnto Christ. O my soule, enter into consideration, see with what bond of re-louing Iesus, who hath loued thee first, thou art bound. O God, how vnlike are thy doings to the actions of the Princes of this world?

King Ezechiah, 2 King. 20. 13. that he might declare his fauour vnto the Imbassadours of the King of Babel, shewed them all his riches and treasures, not giuing them any part therof. Thou dost, O our most gracious Lord not onely shew vs thy treasures, but freely bestowest them vpon vs. I see not (O my soule) how thou

thou art able to recompence so great good-will, onely yeeld thy selfe wholly to the loue of thy redeemer: for it cannot bee thou shouldest serue two maisters. It cannot be that the Arke of God, and the Idoll Dagon (1 Sam. 5. 4.) should stand in one temple: If thou prostrate thy selfe to the loue of creatures, thou shalt vndergoe a hard seruitude: but if thou follow Christ, thou shalt finde rest and quiet. O my soule, we were created to serue & worship God: what higher part of his worshyp, then to come and be partakers of his Deitie. O my Soule be prepared.

CHAP. XXI.

A Meditation vpon that which S. *Paul* teacheth in the first to the Corinthians, Chap. 11.

Consider that the Apostle in the preparation to the most holy Communion, requireth three things: the first is, that the Communicant examine his owne Conscience, which is signified in these words: Let a man proue himselfe, and so let him eate of this bread, and drinke of this Cup. If hee finde his conscience defiled with some sinne, let him make a most humble and penitent confession thereof.

2 Secondarily, the Apostle would that the holy Eucharist be receiued worthily, otherwise the

the danger is great: for he which with a corrupt minde and euill intention approacheth vnto the Lords Table, eateth and drinketh his owne iudgement.

3 Thirdly, S. Paul would that a difference bee made betweene these holy elements, consecrated to a most diuine vse, and the prophane repasts of the body onely.

For the first of these, Let a man proue or examine himselfe: in prouing, or examining himselfe, he first is to consider if hee stand in the true faith of Christ, to be sorry for his sinnes past, to haue a purpose to leade a newe life for the time to come. Againe, in prouing himselfe, he must goe ouer all the ages of his life, all places wherein he hath liued, all companies wherein he hath conuersed, to what faults hee hath beene most inclined, and so rip vp his sinnes passed, as so many scarres, and then goe to Christ the Physition that will cure them all.

For the second, let him ende-

nour to bee a worthie receiuer, comming with all humilitie both of body and minde.

For the third, let him take heede that he put a difference betweene the Bread and Wine in this most holy Sacrament, and that which is common.

Why in the old Law was the lambe brought home foure daies before it was offered? that triall might be first made, whether or no it were fit to be offered.

Why was the Passe-ouer eaten in habite of Pilgrimes? To shew that at this celebration we should call to mind that wee are but Pilgrimes in this world.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

A Meditation vpon that of the Prodigall Son, when he was receiued of his Father, Luk. 15. 20.

THose three thinges which the Apostle requireth in our preparation to the Lords Supper, may be cõsidered in the receiuing home into his Fathers house of the Prodigall Sonne.

First, hee feeleth with griefe his owne miserie, hee acknowledgeth his owne vnthriftinesse: confesseth his sinne, whereby inclusiuely, hee craueth pardon: which done, his father receiueth him.

2. Secondly, hee is cloathed with a new garment, the best in the waredroppe: which may signifie the cloathing of righteousnesse, which is made white in the blood of the Lambe, Apoc. 7. 14.

3 After all, he sitteth downe at the Table, eateth the fat calfe, or that blessed sacrifice that was once offered for all, is entertained with mirth and melodie. For, is there not ioy in the presence of the Angels of God in heauen, ouer one sinner that repenteth? Luke 15. 10.

The Soliloquie vpon this preparation.

LOrd, although thy Apostle had neuer mentioned the puritie of conscience, which is required in comming to this Diuine sacrament, who would not iudge, that thou the fountaine of all puritie, oughtest to be receiued with a pure & cleane heart? O most mercifull Lord how little dost thou require of vs to eate of that Lambe sent of thee from heauen, by whose offering we are deliuered from the seruitude of sinne.

The

The Iewes, to eate their Paſcall Lambe, which was but a ſhadow and figure of this: ought to prouide them a Lambe of a yeare old, Exod. 12. 13. without blemiſh, which roaſted by fire, ſhould bee eaten haſtily of them, with ſweete bread and wilde Lettice, with their loynes girt, their ſhooes on their feete, their ſtaues in their hands. But vnto the eating this true Lamb, which taketh away the ſinnes of the world, we come with the ſweete bread of ſincerity and truth, hauing our loynes girt with chaſtitie, this girdle keepes our new garment from dragling on the ground, with the ſtaffe of Prayer in our hands on which we leane, our feete ſhodd with pious affections, becauſe our paſſage is by ſtonie places. Here is all our labour.

O how true is it (my louing Jeſus) which thou haſt ſaid of thy Law, Math. 11. 28. My yoake is ſweete, and my burthen light? Yea,

Yea, truely, so light and sweet, that if there were not that would imagine a labour in the Precept, it should not deserue the name of a burthen or yoake.

O my Soule, now thou seest to how few things Christ hath bound thee, and how hee hath giuen thee abundance of his grace in this life, by the benefit of this most holy Sacrament: and will giue thee in the other life eternal glorie. Onely take heede to thy selfe, that seeing the Lord of his infinite goodnesse, hath giuen thee so easily this inestimable commodity, thou dost not againe relapse into euill.

Consider earnestly what thou shouldest doe, not to receiue regardfully so gentle a Lord, which commeth to enrich thee with his gifts, were great inhumanitie, very pernicious vnto thy selfe: but to receiue him vnworthily by thy default, were meere sloathfulnesse, which procureth iniurie to him, and punishment vnto thy selfe.

Thou

Thou shalt doe will to imitate the example of the poore Countrey-man, who understanding that the King would rest in his house, remoued all things which hee thought might offend the Kings eyes, did verie diligently sweepe all his house, and although hee could not beautifie it according to the worthinesse of such a Guest, yet hee did as much as hee was able, to receiue him in seemely and decent manner: hee goeth to meete the King with all speede, receiueth him with great ioy, giueth him many thankes for this so great fauour. If then, so many things are done to an earthlie King, what wilt thou do (O my Soule) to the King of Heauen, who commeth not to liue at thy cost, but to impart his goods vnto thee?

Labour therefore in cleansing, and decking thy selfe, hang the Chamber, or vpper roome of thy best Deuotion at heart with

with the Tapestrie of holinesse and well-come him with loue, who of loue saith: My delights to bee with the Sonnes of men. Prou. 8. 31.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

A Meditation for the day we are to Communicate.

IN what day you Communicate, as soone as you awake, early in the Morning, thinke that the Lord doth expect you this day, at his heauenly Table. Thinke of putting on the inward ornaments of the soule, as Faith, Repentance, Deuotion, Charitie, Humblenesse of Minde, and such like.

1 Consider how Christ in his Conception, tooke our Nature, and that wee in this spirituall conception of him are to participate of his nature.

2 Consider you are to receiue him this day in the state of grace,

grace, who shall one day recei
you in the state of glory.

3 Consider that of the fir
eating it was sayde: That da
thou eatest thou shalt die: but
this eating, that day thou eat
thou shalt liue, Ioh. 6.

4 Esteeme thy selfe vnwo
thy, and say: Sweete Iesu wh
loue is this thou pursuest m
withall? Beholde Lord, I pr
pare my selfe this day to recei
thee into the poore Cottage o
an humble heart: but alas, th
Wise-man Salomon himself
when he had in many yeares, an
by much cost built thee a Tem
ple, (as in the first of Kings
and the eight Chapter) did not
withstanding maruaile, tha
thou the God of all Maiestie
wouldest vouchsafe to abide an
dwell in it. What shall I sa
who haue bestowed so litt
paines, so small cost in preparin
thee a Temple? I beseech the
to turne my soule into a house o
Prayer, and to whip out all euil
affections, that it may be righ

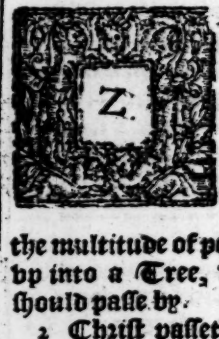
ly sayde to bee, Domus tua, Thy house.

§ Make one repentance with Mary Magdalene, one heartie Repentance for all that is past.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIIII.

A Meditation taken out of the history of *Zacheus*. Luke 19. 2.



ZACHEVS desirous to see IESVS, but for that he was of a low stature, he could not see him for the multitude of people, he went vp into a Tree, where Christ should passe by.

2 Christ passeth by, and casting his mercifull eyes on Zacheus saide: Zachee, make haste to come downe, for to day I must abide in thine house. Hee came downe then reioycing, and receiueth him into his house, thinking that hee was greatly rewarded.

3 Thirdly, the Iewes when they saw Christ turne into the house of a sinner, they murmured:

red: which Zacheus perceiuing, turning to Christ, sayd: Behold Lord, halfe of my goods, I giue to the poore, and if I haue defrauded any thing from any man, I restore fourefold. But Iesus said to him Saluation is come vnto thy house. Thinke of Zacheus, though litle in bodie, yet great in example, rich in goods, richer in goodnes, emptying his house of earthly riches, but filling it with heauenly: giuing not to them that can giue againe, but to the poore who had not to giue againe: thinke how he dealt wisely, proouing his owne Will, making his owne hands his Executors, his owne eyes his ouer-seers.

The Application of this History.

That thou maist be partaker of saluation which is offered in this sacrament, it is necessary that thou be desirous to know & taste Christ, who is after an heauenly manner contained in the same. And to know him it is ne-

ces-

cessary, first, that thou lift vp thy minde on high, and consider the greatnes of God, keeping in the meane while, the ground vnder thy feete, as Zacheus kept it when he stood vpon the tree, that is, to procure that our temporall busines bee then vnder vs, and not ouer our head by distracting vs in deuotion.

2 We must receiue our Lord not with melancholy or anguish of doubtes, but as Zacheus did with ioy, which springeth from a vehement affection towards the holy Sacrament.

3 Consider that it is not sufficient to receiue Christ into our house, and then put the hand in the bosome, but we must furnish the sacred Cõmunion with good workes, by relieuing the necessities of our poore neighbours, after the example of Zacheus: and he which doth so, shall heare this comfortable voice, This day saluation is come into thine house.

As Zachee was willing to receiue Christ into his house, so let vs

be willing to receiue him into our haarts: as Christ said vnto Zachee, This day must I abide in thine house, so saith hee vnto euery one of vs, This day must I abide in thy heart.

The Fruite.

The fruit of this Meditation shall be, to desire & aske of God, an affection to this sacrament: from which affection springeth spirituall consolation, necessary to the holy Communion.

The Soliloquie.

O My bountifull Iesus, how liberall art thou towards him, who doth desire & seek thee? Zachee was held with desire of thee, but of seeing thee onely, and thou not only didst shew thy selfe of him to be seene, but also calledst him, and inuitedst thy selfe into his house: on whom to augment thy fauour, thou bestowedst saluation: Oh, how well hath the Prophet sayde of thee:

AH

All nations seeking thee, shall reioyce and be glad. And let them say alwayes which loue thy sauing health: The Lord be magnified.

Zachee, thou worthily reioycest, because thou hast him in thine house, which maketh all Angels to reioyce. Onely reioyce and esteeme as nothing, if the Iewes murmure, and call thee sinner, since he is at hand for thee which can defend and iustifie thee: ioyne thy selfe to him, and he will be as a buckler for thee, and thou shalt also vnderstand how sweete the Lord is. O my soule, thou hast also cause of reioycing, and peraduenture greater then Zacheus had, seeing to thee also commeth the fountaine of all ioy and gladnesse. Heare what the Prophet Zachary sayth vnto thee: Reioyce, O daughter Sion, and be glad O daughter Ierusalem, behold thy righteous King, and thy Sauiour commeth vnto thee: not commeth he to exact a tribute, or to command any taske, but onely for the cause of sauing thee, and defending

tending thee from the rebuke of thine enemies. Thinke not that a greater benefit is shewed vnto Zacheus, then to thee: for whilst thou dost spiritually receiue him in bread and wine by faith, and after a most heauenly manner, he sheweth that he is com vnto thee not onely to conuerse with thee, and bestow saluation, as hee did to the house of Zachee, but also to vnite himselfe to thee, that thou maist be one certaine thing with him, which is the effect of this his comming.

Who doth not see then, that this is a farre greater benefite then Zachees was. O my gracious Lord, seeing thou hast vouchsafed to enter this poore house of mine, giue me grace that it may not happen to me as to the vngrateful Iewes, who in the day of Palmes receiued thee with ioy and triumph into Ierusalem, but a little after they cried to Pilat, Crucifie him, crucifie him: and casting thy crosse vpon thy shoulders, cast thee forth of the Citie.

Let me die, O Lord before: yea, let me die a thousand deaths, then that I cast thee out of me: for that were to thrust thee out of thine owne house, and my selfe out of Paradise.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

A Meditation vpon these words of Christ.

Luke 19. 5.

Hodie oportet me manere in domo tua.

To day I must abide in thine House.

WHo am I (O most bountiful Iesus) that thou desirest to abide with me? who am I that may deserue to entertaine thee the Lord of heauen? What dost thou finde in mee, that doeth so much delight thee, and inuite thee to come vnder my rooфe? art thou ignorant of my most vile beginning? I am not of the number of that celestiall Hierarchie, I am not a Seraphin, not an Arch-angell, not an Angell, no, nor any of the Thrones,

or other most sacred spirits, my being differs much from them: freed are they from all admixtion of bodie, pure, and innocent. I was borne in sinne, drawing my beginning from the Earth, so meane a subiect, I am not worthie, O my Sauiour, of thy Diuine presence: happily thy delight is to be with the sonnes of men: true, but I am not Abraham, I am not Moses, I am not as the blessed Virgin: no, I beare not the least similitude of these blessed Saints in heauē, while they remained in the world. What shall I say? I am sorrie, O my Lord, I am no more worthie to receiue thee then I am: but my comfort is, that as thou tookest mercie on the woman of Canaan, & all distressed people that came vnto thee, so thou wilt take mercie vpon me, in that thou sayest, to day I must abide in thine house: to day, that is, now and for euer: Domine, fiat voluntas tua, Lord, thy will be done.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

A short Forme of Confession to be made in priuate, before the receiuing of the blessed Sacrament.

I Miserable sinner, confesse, and acknowledge with bended heart, and hands lifted vp in the presence of Almightie God, my many and manifolde sinnes, & that I haue transgressed sundry waies against the precepts of the first and second Table: I am sorrie from the bottome of my heart, and it greeueth me, that I haue so often offended thee: I come vnto thee as an humble sutor, to obtaine mercy and pardon for all my offeces, I beseech thee to sanctifie me by thy holy spirit, to strengthen my faith against

all assaults: to seale vp in me by this holy mysterie, that comfortable hope of the life to come. Direct me, I beseech thee, now approching to thy holy Table, that I may abide with thee, and be a fit habitation for thy holy presence, both now and for euermore. When I consider thou didst create mee, not being asked: redeeme me, not being required, it turneth my teares of sorrow into teares of ioy, my teares of feare into teares of loue. O my Sauiour, shew mercie: for by such great sinners as I am, thou gettest greatest honour, as thou didst by Mary Magdalene.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

An Admonition moving all to reconcile themselues, and forgiue their enemies before they come to be made partakers of the most holy Sacrament.

When thou bringest thy gift to the Altar, saith Christ our Sauiour, Mat. 5. 25. & there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leaue thine Offering before the Altar, and goe thy way, and first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Also in S. Mar. 11. 25. he saith vnto his Disciples, When you stand to pray, forgiue, if you haue ought against any man, that your Father which is in heauen may forgiue you your trespasses. By both which testimonies

simonies of holy Scripture, we learne that all our oblations and praiers (otherwise in themselues amongest the best actions of a Christian life) are in no case acceptable vnto God, without our reconcilement and charitie first had with men. The Wise man Eccles. 28. 2. 3. could thinke it vnmeete in very reason to aske mercie, when we our selues deny mercy. We may remember, that the vnthankful debter that wold not remit his fellow-seruant, (Mat. 18. 30.) for his vncompassionate vsage of his saide fellow, found himselfe the like measure, that is, iudgement without mercie at his Maisters hand.

With what countenance (sayth one) can we looke vp to heauen, and say. Lord forgiue vs our trespasses, as we forgiue them that trespasse against vs, and yet reuenge with all extremitie, the least offences offered vnto our selues? No, no, hee that seeketh vengeance, shall surely find vengeance, Mihi vindictam, ego retribuam: ven-

vengance is mine, saith the Lord I will reuenge. We must let God alone to right our wrongs, vnlesse wee will vsurpe that power which is onely proper vnto him: for our selues, we should not forget the Wise-mans counsell: Forgiue thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done thee, so shall thy sinnes also bee forgiuen thee when thou prayest. Should a man bare hatred against another, and desire forgiuenesse of the Lord? Peter saith vnto Christ, Maister, how often shall my Brother sinne against me, and I forgiue him? vntill seauen times: No Peter (saith our Sauiour) I say not vnto thee, vntill seauen times, but vntill seauentie seuen times, that is, quoties, toties, how often soeuer he sinneth against thee, so often shalt thou forgiue him.

The offering vp of sacrifices in the old Law, was a speciall part of that worship which the people were wont to performe vnto Almighty God as an acceptable seruice vnto him But the Prophet

Esay tels them, Esay 1. 11. all their offerings were vtterly displeasing vnto him: for why? they were all set on crueltie and reuenge: their hands were full of bloud, and therefore God would accept of no Sacrifices at their hands. In our offerings, first, the offerer is accepted, & then the offering. Our oblations that are done in loue with God and man, those ascend like the smoke of Abels sacrifice, and are well pleasing vnto the most highest.

But how should flesh & bloud forgiue where wrong and iniury hath bin offered? That which Adam cannot beare, Christ can: that which to nature is so much against nature, and therefore difficult is to grace nothing so, that which Heathen men wil so hardly brooke, is to Christians, who haue or should haue a further perfection, more facile and easie.

Wherefore our Sauiour tels his Disciples of somewhat more then louing them, who loue first. Ego dico vobis, diligite inimicos,

I say vnto you, loue your Enemies, doe good vnto them that hurt you, pray for them that persecute you: we forgiue, we loue our very enemies, for his sake, who hath done far more for vs. What greater loue (saith S. Iohn) then for one to giue his life for his friend? Yet greater was Christs loue, who gaue his life for vs that were his enemies: we haue some reason to helpe the distressed to relieue the poore & needie: for the very beholding of their necessitie doth often moue compassion: but to loue our enemies we haue no reason in the world, but onely for his sake, who hath cõmanded all those who profesle his name, & expect his kingdome saying, Diligite inimicos, Loue your enemies. We forgiue, and why? Christ hath forgiuen vs. We shew mercy & why? Christ Iesus hath shewed mercy vnto vs. Quid contra nos proximus, (saith an ancient father) shall we see what our neighbour hath done against vs, and shall wee not

not see what Christ hath done for vs? God forbid!

All that we doe or can forgiue are pence onely, Christ hee forgiues talents: we some few, hee ten thousand, for number many, for weight heauy: we shew loue, but Christ shewed loue indeede: loue without example. Were we as ready to remember benefites, as we are iniuries, we would be more charitable, then wee often are, writing our benefits in dust, and our iniuries in marble.

But being readie to reuenge, doe we know how soone we may stand in need of God our selues? No verily: and therefore we had neede to shew compassion to others, least wee receiue like for like.

When as nowe Iacob their Father was dead, Iosephs brethren thought Ioseph would reuenge all the wrong they before vniustly offered their brother: they are deceiued, Ioseph tels them he meant nothing lesse: Am I (saith he) God? as if he should haue

haue said: My selfe am readie to aske forgiuenesse of God, and should I not from my heart forgiue you my brethren? I doe, I doe. Wherefore one sayeth: Qualem erga te Deum habere vis talem te erga proximum ostendas, as thou wouldest haue God bee vnto thee, so be thou to thy neighbour that hath offended thee. There were foure things that might haue moued him, Mat. 18. to haue forgiuen the debt, 1. that it was his fellow, 2. that the debt was small, 3. that he asked it in humble manner, 4. but chiefely that hee himselfe had more forgiuen him in the same case.

To moue Christians to this loue, Christ our Sauiour goeth further and sayth: forgiue, that you may be the children of your Father which is in heauen: for he causeth the sun to rise on the iust and on the vniust. It was a token, that Dauid was of the stocke of Iesse, when hee would not onely not hurt king Saul, his enemie, when hee was aliue, but

but would euen shew mercie vnto his Offspring when he was dead, Is there any (saith he) of the house of Saul, that I may doe good vnto them?

They giue testimony, that they are his followers, who praied for his enemies, Father forgiue them) who shew themselues readie to remit, and can find in their hearts to forgiue offences offered: for it is not a disgrace or a base thing to remit iniuries as we imagine, but it is a princely thing, posse et nolle nocere nobile, to be able, but not to hurt, it is noble.

S. Ambrose told a great Emperour of the world, how Christians did auenge themselues: Our weapons (saith he) are our prayers and teares: wee weepe for our persecutors, we pray for them, and, after this manner do we fight against our enemies.

Neither shal our forgiuing goe away empty: for this actiue mercie shewed vnto men, shall be rewarded with passiue mercy by him

him who hath said: Blessed are the mercifull, for they shall obtaine mercy. Hence it commeth to passe that our enemies many doe vs as much good as the best friends we haue in the world, whereas in forgiuing them, we receiue forgiuenesse of God: but for one drop of water giuen, we receiue by a gainefull interest, a whole Ocean Sea: for our two Mites the whole treasure of the Temple. We giue small benefits and forgiue some trespasses, but with God there is no depth of his bountie, no number of his mercies.

If at any time we are iustly moued (as we often are) to awaken our thankfulnesse, or to vse that quid retribuemus? of the Prophet, Psalme 115. 12. What shall shall we do vnto the Lord for all the benefits he hath done vnto vs? wee will take the Cup of saluation, and call vpon the name of the Lord: then most especially approaching vnto this holy Mysterie (for of the chiefest bene-

benefite, the chiefest remembrance is required) which the old Christians in the Primitiue Church well remembring, gaue euident testimonies at this solemn occasion, their deuout prayers, and by their liberality to the poore, their visiting the sick, and other like works of mercy, which doe enter where our bodies cannot enter.

And besides their charitable reliefe of the needy, it is wonderfull to consider, and it may doe a good mans heart good, to call to mind the vniforme peace, and peaceable vnion they retained among themselues, all assembled in one communion of Saints, to worship him on earth, with whō they hoped shortly to reioyce in heauen. They forgate not that charge left by Christ at his departure from the world: By this shall men know that you are my Disciples, that you loue one another: nor that louing entreatie of Abraham had with Lot, Gen. 13. 11. Let there be no strife betweene thee

thee and me, betweene thy heard-men, and my heard-men, for wee are Brethren.

Be of one minde (**sayth the Apostle, 2 Corinthians cap. 13.**) Liue in peace, and the GOD of Loue and Peace shall be with you. **And to the Ephesians hee sayth,** Let all bitternesse, and anger, and wrath, be put away from you, with all maliciousnesse: Be courteous one to another, forgiuing one another, euen as God, for Christs sake forgaue you. There is but one bodie, one spirit, one faith, one baptisme, one God, which is aboue all, through all, and in vs all.

Last of all, in this mysterie, as the faithfull find tranquilitie of conscience wrought within: so also they finde the spreading of charitie towardes men abroad: which charitie thinketh no euill, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

When as Christ our Sauiour was nowe to celebrate his last supper, hee himselfe washeth his disciples feete, wipeth them with

a Towell, giueth a precedent of humilitie & loue, admitteth Iudas that bare an euill minde towards him, to his owne dish, giueth him a sop, speakes mildely vnto him, which all were tokens of loue: should we not take example by our Lord and master? when may we more fitly vse that Hymne of the Angels, respecting the cõmon cause of ioy, we haue, Glory be to God on high, in earth peace, towardes men good will? and not good will in shew, but euen in singlenes of heart: wherefore to conclude with that of the Apostle S. Paul, Phil. 2. 1. If there be any cõsolatiõ in Christ, any comfort of loue, any fellowship of the spirit, be we of one accord, let the same minde be in vs that was in Christ, who humbled himselfe: wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and giuen him a name aboue al names, that at the name of Iesus euery knee should bow, Phil. 2. 10.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of the manner in particular, how the faithful Communicant is to examine himſelfe.

That a Chriſtian man is to examine himſelfe before he preſume to eate of this bread, and drinke of this cup, was before ſhewed to be the counſell of the Apoſtle S. Paul, or rather of him from whom S. Paul ſpake. Now of the manner in particular of this examining: The firſt thing to be conſidered is, that a Chriſtiã man thinke it not grieuous to ſearch the ſecrets & corners of his Soule, which Dauid, though a King, and called away with many affaires, yet ceaſed not ſo to doe, as appeareth Pſal. 6

Then let him goe ouer all the particulars of his whole life, as in

in what age, in what place, at what times, & in what company he hath liued: let him cal to mind how hee hath obserued Gods commandements, the workes of mercy which he hath omitted, the seuen capitall sins, or any one of them which he hath committed.

In this manner: first, how he hath offended in Pride, whether he hath desired vaine-glorie for the goods of nature, as beautie, strength, youth: for the goods of this world, as Land, Cattle, rich clothing, siluer, gold: for the goods of grace, knowledge, eloquence, wisedome, or other vertues: if he haue despised or mocked others, which haue wanted any of these: if hee hath faigned himselfe by hypocrisie more holy or vertuous then hee hath beene indeed: if hee haue shewed himselfe by boasting to haue magnified himselfe, that hee hath had gifts singular before others: if he hath bin proud of his kindred or friends, or fauour, or office, or dignitie: if he haue disdained his kindred,

hindred, because of their pouertie: if he haue bin disobedient to Superiors: if he haue trusted in his owne wit: if hee haue loued singularity in speech, singularity in fasting, singularity in prayer, neglecting that which is ordained by the Church: if he haue bin curious in searching into high and intricate mysteries: if hee haue bin proud in iustifying him selfe, and preferring his owne deeds before the deeds of others.

Secondarily, in Wrath: let him call to mind whether he hath beene moued or stirred vp to anger against any man: if he haue wished him any hurt in bodie, goods, or good name: if he haue long time kept malice in his minde, often thinking how hee might reuenge: if he haue vexed or troubled any man by suit, rather vpon spleene then equitie if he haue cursed or asked vengeance vpon any, though it were his enemie: if he haue bin impatient in time of trouble, sickness, or any other aduersitie.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, in Enuie: if he hath beene glad of other mens hurt, and sorrie for other mens prosit, as their good fame, or prosperitie whatsoeuer: if he haue in himselfe defamed any, either priuily, or openly, or giuen help or counsell thereunto: if hee haue made debate or discord betweene partie & partie, or hath let to make peace and vnity to the vttermost of his power.

Fourthly, in Couetousnesse: let him bethinke himselfe whether hee hath taken other mens goods, by theft, or any other sinister or corrupt meanes, or had a will or purpose so to doe: whether hee hath with-holden other mens goods wrongfully from them: whether he hath by faire promises fraudulently deceiued any: whether hee hath vsed any false wares, light waights, scant measures, or the like: whether hee hath detained goods to his owne vse, which were intended to the vse of others: whether he hath for aduantage sake, vsed falst-

falsehood in word or deed: whether hee hath with-drawne his hand from charitie, and refreshing poore people when he might haue relieued them: last of all, whether hee hath beene desirous of heaping vp worldly goods, rather then of laying vp treasure in heauen.

Fiftly, in Sloth: if hee haue beene negligent or careleſſe in Gods seruice, especially vpon the Sunday, and holiday: slothfull to come to the Church: slothfull to pray when hee was there, slothfull to heare the Word of God, slothfull to apply his mind vnto good thoughts and godlie meditations: if he haue bin careleſſe to restraine his eyes from vnlawfull lookes, or his feete from euill wayes, his mind from euill thoughts: if he haue spent his time in idlenes, or left vndon things he ought to haue done.

Sixtly, in exceſſe of eating and drinking: whether he hath lightly regarded times of fasting: whether hee hath eaten or drun-

drunken at any time vnto surfetting, or by excesse hath fallen into dissolute mirth, and retchlesse behauiour, whether he hath had inordinate delight in eating and drinking, or desired meates and drinkes more costly and delightsome then he ought.

Seuenthly, in Luxury: whether he hath kept in his minde euill & vncleane desires, with delectation: whether hee hath not fled the occasions of this sin as much as possibly he could, and euermore bin careful to keepe his bodie as the Temple of the holy Ghost.

When he hath remembred diligently in the secret Counsell-house of his cõscience all defects, then let him prostrate himselfe in penitent prayer, and say;

I accuse my selfe, that I haue beene negligent in putting away euill thoughts: for which I cry God mercie.

I accuse my selfe, that I haue spoken vaine words, idle, and vnprofitable; for which I crie God mercie.

I

I accuse my selfe of my workes, that I haue not done them so purely for the loue of God, as I ought: for which I cry God mercie.

I accuse my selfe, that I haue not kept my fiue senses, especially mine eyes, from all occasions of offending God, as I ought: for which I cry God mercie.

I accuse my selfe of impatiencie in aduersitie, which I haue not taken as from the hand of God, but haue beene often vpon little occasions disquieted and troubled: for which I crie God mercie.

I accuse my selfe, that I haue not performed the workes of mercie, either spirituall, as comforting the afflicted, counselling the ignorant, calling them home that goe astray, reproouing them that wilfully offend: or corporall, as visiting the sicke, feeding the hungry, relieuing the distressed: for which I crie God mercie.

I accuse my selfe, for that I

haue beene so vnthankful to Almighty God, for all his benefits bestowed vpon me: for which I cry to God mercy.

I purpose stedfastly to amend my former imperfections, and to continue Christs faithfull seruant vnto my liues end. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

Of Restitution.

Amongest those rules needful to bee obserued in preparing our selues, Restitution may not be omitted, by which satisfaction is made for hurt or damage done vnto others, iniury is recompenced: concerning which Restitution, these circumstances are to be obserued.

First, who it is that doth an iniury: secondly, to whom it is done: thirdly, what this iniurie is: fourthly, how great: fiftly, the place where: sixtly, the time when: and seuenthly, the reward thereof.

For the first: Who ought to make Restitution? Surely he whosoeuer hath beene the cause

of vniuſt receiuing, or retay-ning that which was anothers.

For the ſecond, to whom Reſtitution is to be made: ſurely to the right owner, or partie iniu-red: if acceſſe may not be had to the partie iniured, let it bee done to thoſe that are neere vnto him: Let Reſtitution be made to the Lord of all, by giuing to the poore: if the partie to whom Reſtitutiō ſhould be made, be dead, it ſhall be giuen to his heires: if his heires bee vnknowne, they ſhall be enquired, or ſought out: if they may not be found, it ſhall be giuen to Chriſt in the poore.

For the third: what is to bee reſtored? Surely that which of right belonged vnto another, which and had vpon truſt, or loane howſoeuer.

For the fourth: how much ought to bee reſtored? if the quantitie of the thing or loſſe be certaine, then let the ſame quan-titie be reſtored: if vncertaine (as often it commeth to paſſe in iniuries) then let ſo much be re-

ſtored

stored as good and wise men shall thinke conuenient.

For the first, to wit, the place where Restitution ought to be, surely in the place where the losse was had.

For the first, Restitution must haue reference vnto the time, that it be done forth-with, or at least-wise so soone as conuenently it may be: for the negatiue precept is included, thou shalt not hold that which is anothers: so that there bee a readinesse of minde to performe this, though the execution thereof be deferred for a season.

For the seauenth, to wit, the reward of Restitution: make Restitution, and with him in the Gospell, Luke 19. 5. become the son of Abraham, and so the heire of euerlasting saluation.

CHAP. XXX.

Other rules concerning a Christians examining himselfe before the holy Communion.

EXamination or probation of ones selfe, may be reduced to these 4. heads: whereof, the first is faith: the second is Repentance: the third, an heart occupied in no other affaires then holy and heauenly: the fourth, a resolution to newnesse of life.

Concerning Faith, the Communicant ought principally to examine himselfe whether hee stedfastly beleeue, that God through Iesus Christ, is become propitious vnto man, and that through him; hee attaineth full redemption.

Con-

Concerning Repentance, it is requisite that he examine himselfe whether he be sorry from the bottome of his hart for his sins, and whether he haue repentance: for Repentance makes him feele the burthen, and feeling the burthen, to goe vnto him that will ease all those that are wearie and heauy laden. Repentance makes him to finde the disease, and finding the disease, to runne vnto the Physitian, and receiue this spirituall Physicke of the soule.

Concerning an Heart occupied in holy & heauenly affaires: the Communicant ought to examine himselfe whether his heart be occupied in good thoughts: now, what better thoughts may possesse the minde of a faithfull Communicant, presenting himselfe at the Table of the Lord, then these or the like? O God thou art good! O soule thou art happie!

Concerning a purpose or resolution of newnesse of life, the Communicant ought to exa-

mine himselfe whether hee constantly purpose with himselfe that he will correct all his faults, and not commit them againe for all the allurements that the world can offer. And although he hath a thousand times fallen into the same, yet so often also to purpose with himselfe amendment: yet with this respect, that not by his owne strength he may hope to performe this, but to place all in the ayde and assistance of God: from whom euery good and perfect gift descendeth, Iames 1. 17. and to whom wee are euermore to pray with him: We beleeue, Lord helpe our vnbeliefe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of quietnesse, and remouing the incumbrance of worldly affaires and businesse before the receiuing of the holy Communion.

GReat defects there are in many, that cõming vnto the holy Supper of the Lorde, they come sometimes perplexed with varius thoughts sometimes distracted with a multitude of earthly businesses: these defects ought to be remoued: for what more conuenient at this time, then holy, quiet, & a minde sequestred from these inferiour cogitations? When thou entrest into the Church (sayth Saint Bernard) leaue without all secular affaires, intend vnto him which intendeth vnto thee: much

more comming vnto the Table of the Lord, leaue all thy cares, and resigne thy selfe wholy vnto God.

It is sayd of Socrates, that his schollers bringing him presents, Sophocles a poore Boy of the company, comes vnto him in this manner: Sir, I haue nothing to giue you, onely I giue you my selfe: to whom Socrates answered, Thou that giuest thy selfe to me, shalt receiue thy selfe bettered by me: and so he did, after instruction, in vertue & learning. If wee haue nothing to giue, the very giuing of our selues to God is acceptable to him, & profitable to the giuers.

There are that write of Thomas, of Aquine, that learned Diuine, how he was spoken vnto in this manner, as it seemed, from God: Quid dabo tibi Thoma? Thomas, what shall I giue thee? his reply was sayd to be, Teipsum Domine: Thy selfe Lord.

What is the cause that we are often

often weake and weary: surely for no other cause then for distractions in humane affaires. Oh happie were they that nowe might haue a little shew of that holy Cittie new Ierusalem, which Saint Iohn saw descending from heauen, Reuel. 21. 10. Truely, this should we see with Saint Iohn, if we were with him in the Spirit, but this cannot bee so long as we are in the flesh, and in concourse of worldly busines.

When our Corne (saith S. Austen) doth putrifie in lower places, wee remoue it into higher, where it is safe: this should wee dos with our cogitations. Saint Chrysostome vnto the people of Antioch, sayth, You would bestow your time, and imploy your substance where most gaine is to bee got: why then set your affections on heauenly things. We see that those who sit vpon round things, doe sit vnstable, but those which state themselues vpon a corner

stone

stone sit sure: Christ is the Corner-stone, vpon whom we may safely rest: the world is vnstable and troublesome: our Sauiour doth manifest this vnto his Disciples, Iohn. 16. 33. In me you shall haue peace, but in the world you shall haue affliction. Where there is a contrary effect betweene these two, vos in me, and vos in mundo, you in me, and you in the world: in me, peace and quiet: in the world, trouble and affliction. Who would take care about puddle water, that may drinke freely of the water of life? They that desire nothing but Christ, shall in Christ finde all things Elkanah said vnto Anna: Am not I better to thee then ten sonnes? 1 Sam. 1. 8. Is not Christ better then all the pleasures and profits of the world?

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.
Dutifull Considerations.

1 Consider who and how great a one hee is whom thou art about to receiue.

2 If Iohn the Baptist sanctified in his Mothers wombe thought himselfe vnworthie to vnloose the Latchet of Christes shooes, may not I say with humilitie and faith, How dare I receiue him? nay, touch him?

3 If the Apostle Saint Peter said to Christ; Goe from me: for I am a sinfull man: how may I presume to ioyne my selfe vnto him?

4 If Vzzah the Priest were punished for touching the Arke without that reuerence he ought how may I feare to touch that Arke, wherein are hid heauenly treasures?

5 If

5 If the Paschall Lambe might not bee eaten but with sweete bread, and sowre herbs: how shall I dare to eate, but by Faith and Contrition, the true Lambe? Wherefore I will come with sorrow for my sinnes, and assurance of the forgiuenesse of my sinnes, in thy merites and mercies O Christ Iesu.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of externall reuerence, and kneeling at the time of receiuing the holy Sacrament.

Although for no other reſpect, yet in regard of the ſolemne performance of our religious offices in the face of the Church, that Rule of the Apoſtle ought to direct vs, Let all things be done honeſtly, and in order. For if it be duly to be reſpected in actions of common life, much more is it religiouſly to bee regarded in any part of the ſeruice of God, eſpecially preſenting our ſelues before him, and offering our ſoules & bodies a ſacrifice to ſerue him, who gaue his moſt dearely beloued Sonne a ſacrifice to ſaue vs.

What

What doth better become our bodies at this houre, then to bee sensible witnesses of mindes vnfainedly humbled, calling to mind our sins and our vnworthinesse, so much as to gather vp the crummes vnder his Table?

Our Lord and Sauiour at the first institution of this holy Sacrament obserued that which custome, and long continuance made fit in celebrating the Passeouer; we, in celebrating the Lords Supper obserue that which fitnes & decencie amongst the people of God, and long practise of the Church hath made vsuall.

The seruice of God consisting both in the inward humblenes of the minde, and outward reuerence of the body, doth manifest, that duties ought to proceede from both. As nature first maketh the heart, and after, externall parts in man: So, first God requireth obedience of the mind, as in the first Commandement, and

outward reuerence of the bodie, as we see in the second. Againe, our bodies are the members of Christ (as the Apostle speaketh) and members ought to be obedient to their head.

To say that outward reuerence is not expedient, is a branch of the Heresie of the Manichees. To come vnto the holy Table of the Lord in any other behauiour then beseemeth humble Suppliants, meekely kneeling vpon our knees, being now to receiue graces from the giuer of grace, were great indignitie offered. To come into such a presence, and to demeane our selues, as if wee were assembled to sit in Commission with God, is sure farre from Christian pietie.

Dauid went vncouered before the Arke, Michol mocketh him: Dauids answere is, It is before the Lord who hath exalted mee. In the first of Kings, 8. Salomon in all his glory was vpon his knees. In the fourth of the Reuelation, the foure and twentie Elders,

ders, which signified the Church triumphant, fall downe before him, that was, and is, & is to come.

We owe to God a two-fold deuotion, internall, and externall: the one to bee done, the other not to be left vndone. The words of our Sauiour to the Woman of Samaria, God is a Spirit, and the true worshippers are they that worship him in Spirit and Truth: They doe not take away externall worship, as S. Ambrose, and S. Cyril expound that place: But in spirit, that is, without the shadowes of the Iewes: In truth, without the errour of the Gentiles. So, in spirit principally, but not in spirit onely: for he that created both body and soule, will haue duties of both. It will be replyed that Pagans haue kneeled to their Idols. So it may be that Pagans haue worshipped the Sun, shall we therefore cast away the vse of the Sunne?

Sure kneeling is a gesture well beseeming so holy a seruice.

S.

S. Paul blamed the Corinthians for their vnreuerent assembling at the Lords Table, & tels them there was a difference betweene Gods house and their owne, betweene sacred, and the common assemblies.

Let them therefore take heede by the example of those Corinthians, amongst whom many were afflicted & punished vnto death, as the Apostle in that place testifieth, for their want of reuerence at the Table of the Lord: that make no more of this holy seruice then of some familiar & ordinary matter: but let all deuout Christians present themselues with humilitie both of bodie and minde, kneeling in his seruice to him, and his honour: who hath said, Euery knee shall bow before me, Esay 45. 23.

It is daily saide, and to our greater shame neglected, Ps. 95. 6. O come, let vs worship and fall downe, and kneele before the Lord. We must learne of Saint Paul, to bow our knees vnto the

Father.

Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, Eph. 2.14. & not to be as the people of whom the Prophet Esay complaineth, Esay 48.4. whose neck was an iron sinew. We call it a seruice, & beseech God to accept it as a reasonable seruice: now seruants before their Masters will shew respect and reuerence. We may consider the place where we are, which is the house of God, & holines becommeth his house, saith the Prophet David. Ieremy biddeth vs to lift vp our hands and hearts to God in the heauens Lam. 3.41. If the Table of a mortall man we will vse to take the lowest roome, much more ought wee to humble our selues at this so high and so heauenly a presence.

If S. Paul doth require the lifting vp of pure hands in prayer, & S. Iames saith, God resisteth the proud, & giueth grace to the humble: then may the deuout Communicant vse that of S. Bernard: Domine qui das gratiã humilibus, da gratiam vt sim humilis: Lord, thou

thou that giuest grace to the hũble, giue me grace to be humble.

CHAP. XXXIIII.

A Prayer to God the Father, to be said before the holy Communion, vsed by Thomas of Aquine.

GOD, the Creator of all things, Father omnipotent, whose beginning receiueth no beginning, whose euerlastingnesse is without end, whom all things confesse their Maker: I miserable and vnworthie sinner, being now to approach to the honorable Feast of the bodie and bloud of thy deare Son our Lord Iesus Christ: carrying a troubled heart, a defiled bodie, a polluted tongue, and a wounded conscience, am much vexed, and what to choose I know not: for if I come not, I fly from life, & if I come vnworthily, I purchase damnation. O high Diuinitie,

O dreadfull Maiestie, O louing mercy, whither shall I goe? or whither shall I flye? or what (miserable creature) shall I doe? I haue sinned against heauen and before thee, and I am not worthy to aske as a son, but sorrowfully sighing, and striking my breast, and trauelling I speake: Woe is me wretched sinner, I haue lost that which pertained to mee of a sonne, but thou hast kept the goodnesse of a most louing Father: pardon therefore O father, O most gentle Father, pardon, pardon thy prodigall sonne, returning, though at last: and stretching forth thy hand of mercie from high, receiue me wretched sinner in peace and fauour: who liuest and raignest God for euer and euer, Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXV.

Another Prayer to God the Son, before the holy Communion.

O Lord Jesus Christ, which art the onely Son of God, the most high KING of Kings, Lord of Lords, the Image of the Father, the brightnesse of eternall light, whom the Angels doe onely desire to behold, who after all thy suffering, praying for thine enemies, now sittest at the throne of glory: who am I that doe presume not onely to behold thee my God, but also to take and receive thy bodie into the lodging of my bodie, and house of my soule, contaminated Sinner? O miserable that I am, and most unhappie of all men, which do this so exceeding great

great iniury to thee my God and Sauiour: for when a thousand yeares cleares are not sufficient to receiue, at the least but once worthily, this reuerent and most precious Sacrament, so high & diuine a Mysterie: I wretched and vnworthie Creature, daily offending, and adding sinne vnto sinne vnprepared, and of an heart lesse contrite and purged, doe notwithstanding take vpon mee often to receiue it. But because thy mercy is greater by infinite, then my miserie, neither hath it beene heard from the beginning of the world, that thou hast euer despised the prayers of the humble, which sauest them that trust in thee, and which hast shed thy precious bloud for our saluation, & the saluation of the world: and for an euerlasting pledge of thy loue towardes vs hast ordained this Sacrament: trusting in this thy vnspeakeable loue, I most humbly thinke of comming to thy Table, of putting out from the house of my

Soule,

Soule, the sowre leauen of hatred and euill will towardes all, that I may keepe this holy passeouer, with the sweet bread of sinceritie and loue.

Grant me thy grace, that this holy mystery may turne and become effectuall to the life and saluation of bodie and soule, that I may firmely abide in thee, which intend to receiue thee into me.

Let my minde be confirmed amongest so great mysteries with thy comfortable presence, that it may vnderstand thou art present with her, and reioyce perfectly before thee, the fire which alwayes burneth, the brightnes which alwayes shineth: sweet Iesu, good Iesu, the bread of life which refreshest vs euer, and yet neuer decayest, which art alwayes eaten, & remainest alwayes whole, inflame and sanctifie thy vessell: purge it from malice, fill it with thy grace, and being filled, preserue it euermore in thy holy loue which liuest & raignest one God, world without end, Amen.

A Prayer to God the holy Ghost.

O Holy Spirit, make my spirit conformable vnto thee, sanctifie me, O thou sanctifier of the hearts & reines, that I may be prepared to receiue him holily, who is the holy of holies, to thy glory: to whom with the Father, and the Sonne, bee all Glorie, world without end, Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Of the Deuout man, to whom Chriſt in his laſt Supper ſhew-eth fauour.

IMagine thou haddeſt beene at Ieruſalem whē this no-ble ſacrament was inſtitu-ted by Chriſt, that thou hadſt beene inuited by ſome of the Apoſtles to bee preſent: conſider with what ioy thy ſoule had receiued this meſſage, and how haſtily all buſineſſe laid aſide, thou wouldſt haue runne thither.

Imagine, that as ſoone as thou hadſt come to the Supper, the Lord had waſhed thy feete, and ſaid, with teares falling on them, I doe this to waſh away many ſinnes committed againſt thy creator, by walking through

vngodly wayes, I wash thee for the labor which thou shalt suffer for me in a spirituall life.

3 Imagine, that Christ sayd vnto thee, come vnto the table of Angels, eate my bread, drinke wine which I haue mixed for thee.

4 Lastly, imagine how he bad thee sit downe at the Table, casting his most louing eyes vpon thee, saying: Desiderio desideraui, with a desire haue I desired to eate this Passeouer with you. I haue preuented thee with great benefits, and will hereafter enrich thee with greater, only continue in the loue of me. Consider what modesty thou wouldst haue vsed at that holy Table; with what attention thou wouldest haue receiued the words of Iesus.

The fruit of this Meditation.

THe fruit is, to giue the Lord heartie thankes for this inestimable benefit, now to be re-

receiued: to beseech him that hee would not suffer thee to die vngratefull: to call to minde, that Christ kept the best wine vntill the last, left this holy repast as a sweete remembrance of his loue at parting: that this loue of his was a motion naturall, which motion (say the Philosophers,) is most forceable towardes the end.

The Soliloquie.

O My soule, how louingly doth the Lord knocke at thy doore with a desire of entring in, & resting with thee? arise (O my soule) & Christ shall giue thee light: Not onely the Shep-heards of Bethlehem had cause of ioy, who found as it was told them, but thou hast cause of ioy too, who shalt find the ioy of Israel. No maruel though Martha and Mary went forth to meet the Lord, knowing how he would fil their minds with celestial consolation: goe forth (O my Soule) to meete him that commeth vnto

thee, who is the stay, yea, the whol stay of all thy being. The water that is separated from the fountaine, vanisheth: the bough that is cut from the tree, withereth: the body from which the soule is gone, dieth: depart not therefore (O my soule) from the soul of thy soule, but embrace him with all gladnesse. Lord, as there is no doubt, but that such was the excesse of thy loue & fauour, whereat euen the Angels were amazed: so is it sure that I was most bound, not onely to run the way of all thy commandements, but also to spend my life for the loue of thee. Thou hast bestowed on me, this so excellent a gift, more noble then humane vnderstanding is able to cõceiue, from whẽce springeth an Obligation, which doth binde me vnto thee. Who doth not see that I shall be most vnthankefull, if I acknowledge not thy singular loue? O my hart open thy selfe, & shew with what bond of re-louing Jesus, louing thee, thou art bound.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

When you are about to communicate, and are now receiuing the most holy Eucharist, meditate vpon these sayings of holy scripture.

Ecce Sponsus venit: behold the bridegroome cõmeth, goe forth to meet him, Mat. 25. 6.

2 Ecce ancilla Domini: behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it vnto me according to thy word, Luke 1. 18.

3 Dic verbum, & viuet anima: I am not worthy, &c. doe but say the word, and my soule shall liue. Mat. 8. 29.

4 Lift vp your heads, O yee gates, and be ye lift vp yee euerlasting doores, and the King of glory shall come in, Psal. 24. 7.

5 Taste and see how gracious

ous the Lord is, blessed is the man that putteth his trust in him, Psal. 34. 8. Saying:

O good Jesu, ioyne mee inwardly vnto thee, to the glory of thy name, and the saluation of my soule.

Also in the time of Communicating, say: Turne vnto thy rest (O my soule.) Againe, Lord say vnto my soule, I am thy saluation. And againe, O knit my hart vnto thee, and I will feare thy name. And last of all say: O most louing and sweet Jesus, the loue and sweetnesse of my heart, the life of my soule, my mellifluous and euerlasting good, haue mercie vpon me, bee with mee, O Lord, now and for euer, Amen.

Or thus:

GOod Jesu, the sweetnes of my heart, the life of my soule, my eternall God, bountifull Jesus, ioyne me neerely vnto thee, to the prayse and glorie of thy name, and to the saluation of my soule, Amen.

Imme-

Immediately after ſay the 103. Pſalme.

PRayſe the Lord (O my ſoule) and all that is within mee, prayſe his holy name.

2 Prayſe the Lord, O my ſoule, and forget not all his benefits.

3 Which forgiueth all thy ſins, and healeth all thy infirmities.

4 Which ſaueth thy life from Deſtruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and louing kindneſſe.

5 Which ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things, making thee yong and luſtie as an Eagle.

Or that Hymne of Simeon, Luke 2.29.

Lord now letteſt thou thy ſeruant depart in peace, for mine eyes haue ſeene thy ſaluation.

So soone as we haue Communicated.

THy bloud (O Lord Iesus Christ) which was shed for vs, let it be to the remission of all our sinnes, of all our negligences and ignorances: let it bee to the strengthning, increase, and conseruation of Faith, Hope, and Charitie, of Graces, of Vertues, of carefulnesse of pleasing thee in this life, and of attaining glory in the life eternall.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Of the reuerence and deuotion giuen by the auncient Fathers to this most holy Sacrament.

With what chastitie of body, and puritie of mind ought I to receiue that mysterie, where thou O Lord, art the feeder, and the food: the giuer and the gift? Ambrosius in oratione ant. sacr. cœn.

S. Hierome a little before his departure, being about to receiue humbly kneeling, did communicate with many teares. Euseb. in vita S. Hironimi.

It is written of Constantine, no lesse godly then mightie, an Emperour, that with great Reuerence and Deuotion, before any attempt against his Enemies, his wont was to receiue the

the holy Eucharist. Euseb. in vita Constantin.

By the force of this Sacrament, the force of the Deuill is rebated. Ignatius ad Ephes.

S. Cyprian calleth this blessed Sacrament, a ioyful solemnitie. Cyp. de Cœn. Dom.

Of the old Christians, their solemne assembly to receiue the Eucharist, was called ἀγάπη, an Assembly of loue.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

A Forme of Thankesgiuing, after the receiuing of the most holie Communion.

Giue thee thanks, O most louing Iesus, who hast vouchsafed to admit me a sinnefull Creature to the magnificent and quickning Feast of thy sacred Table.

Thou wouldest that I should be as the Arke of the couenant, where thou thy selfe vouchsafest to abide. Thou wouldest that in this Arke, Manna should bee kept, wherewith thou didst feede thy people, vntill they entred into the land of Promise. Cause I beseech thee, that this Manna now receiued, whereof that was but a figure, may be preserued in my

my soule, that I may feele the effectuall fruit of thy passion, for the remission of my sinnes, the merit of righteousnesse purchased onely by thy passion, and the reward of euerlasting glorie.

Cause also, that like as in the Arke the tables of the law were kept, so a desire of fulfilling thy will, may bee contained in my soule. Grant that I may honor, loue, and obey thee, that I bee separated from this loue, by no allurements whatsoeuer of my ghostly enemie. Tarry with me, O blessed Iesu, vntill the euening of my age, & when the night of death approacheth, I will not let thee goe till thou hast blessed me, and yeelded to this petition of my sobbing soule. O Lord fulfill her desire, neuer depart from her.

What blessing shall I giue vnto thee, O my deere Sauiour? Where shall I begin to expresse my loue and dutie towards thee, which hast said: Behold I am with you, euen vnto the end? My soule

ſoule deſireth to be ſatisfied in the beholding of thy coũtenance, euen as the Hart longeth for the fountaines of water. Turne thee (O my Soule) into thy reſt: for the Lord hath done wel for thee: he hath ſhewed thee maruailous great kindneſſe in the land of the liuing. For this cauſe alſo ſhall my fleſh reſt in hope: bleſſe thou the Lord, O my Soule.

CHAP.

CHAP. XL.

Another forme of Thankesgiuing.

OMnipotent & most louing Father, I cannot giue thee thankes worthie enough, according to the desire of my minde, for the treasure of this heauenly foode, which thou hast now giuen me in this heauenly mystery ineffable, that is to say, the true bread of heauen, that euerlasting meat that abideth for euer, thy blessed Sonne, our Lord and Sauiour Christ Iesus, in whom I haue obtained, by the gift of this holy Communion, a pledge of an inheritance to come. Grant (O Lord) that I may daily

daily profit in vertue and godlines, that this sacred vnion with Christ may be of such force in me that reiecting all euill wayes, I may go forward in piety toward God, chastity towards my selfe, and charitie towards my neighbor, to thy good pleasure, through the same our Lord and Sauior Iesus Christ, Amen.

The Soliloquie.

AWake my Soule, and behold the new fauour wherwith louing Iesus doth prosecute thee. Thou hast good cause to reioyce, that the Lord of maiesty vouchsafeth to come vnto thee, to comfort thee. Continue onely a good will for all this bountie. Be not as the nine vnthankfull Lepers, who forgat their curing. Cast all thy care vpon him, who careth for thee: cease not to magnifie him (O my soule) for he that is mightie hath magnified thee, and done great things for thee.

Thou

Thou knowest how the sonne of God loued thee, when departing out of the world vnto the father, he left thee so comfortable a remembrance, and seale of all his mercies. O loue without measure: Returne (O my Soule) vnto thy rest: for the Lord hath blessed thee. Returne vnto thy gracious Sauiour, of whom thou maiest say: here will I rest, here will I dwell for euer.

Can it be, O Lord, that thou wouldest follow man with such loue, as to vnite thy selfe vnto him? Reioyce, O yee sonnes of Adam, for no longer shall that of the Prophet be applyed to you: My teares haue beene my meate day and night, whilst they yet daily said: where is now thy God? Teares are now no longer your meate, but the gladsome foode of Angels, your God is with you, euen vnto the end. The poore doe eate and are satisfied. O Lord, grant me the grace of Deuotion and thankefulnesse, that I may aske instantly, expect patiently, receiue

receiue it gratefully, conserue it humbly, and vse it diligently, to the glory and honour of thy holy and blessed name, Amen.

I desire to offer my selfe, my soule and bodie, a sacrifice vnto thee: nay, I offer vp all my sins, both originall and actuall, vpon the acceptable Altar of thy mercie: consume them with the sacred fire of thy loue, and let this Offering, as Abels Offering, be well pleasing in thy sight. But to returne vnto this heauenly food now offered: Ah hard and peruerse hart of mine, how canst thou continue earthly, when as thou art fed with the bread of heauen? When at length wilt thou become heauenly? how is it that thou doest remaine sensuall, and alienated from the Spirite, which art spiritually conserued? Is it because thou dost consist of earth? O Iesu remember here what thou hast elsewhere sayd: I come to send a fire, and what is my desire, but that it may be kindled? Let it be kindled in me, that

I

I may bee carried vpward, and seek the things which are aboue, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: that though my bodie conuerse here in earth, my affections may be in heauen, that from henceforth not so much I liue, as thy grace may be sayd to liue in me.

CHAP. XLI.

The eleuenth generall Meditation to be vsed after the receiuing of the blessed Sacrament.

COnsider with what labours and teares Adam, after he was cast out of Paradise did eate the bread of carefulnes, all the daies of his life. But now man, receiued into the state of Grace, is come to feede on the Bread of life it selfe.

2 Consider that Salomon would

would not let his wife the daughter of Pharao, an Idolater dwel in his house, because the Arke of God had beene there: So, we ought not to let sinne reigne in vs after the receiuing of the holy Eucharist, because the Arke of his Couenant also hath beene receiued of vs.

3 Consider, that as the Israelites when they had eaten the paschall Lambe, and were deliuered from Pharaohs bondage, made no stay in the wildernes of Egypt, but set forward forthwith towards the Land of Promise. So, after this our Passeouer, wherein a mightie deliuerance from the hands of our spirituall Pharaoh is signified, wee are to depart from the works of darknesse, to goe forward without delay, from grace to grace, from vertue to vertue, vntill we come to our heauenly Canaan.

4 Consider, how the Wisemen, when they had seene Christ at Bethlehem, and there done their humble reuerence, Math. 2. 12.

12. they returned not by ambitious & cruell Herod, nor by troublesome Ierusalem, but per aliam viam, another way. So, wee hauing visited Christ at our Bethlehem, which signifieth the house of Bread, and there offered our soules and bodies a sacrifice vnto him, should returne towardes our owne country, which is aboue, not by the ambitions and troublesome desires of the world but passe along peaceably, another new way.

5 Consider, how iust Noah was an hundred yeares together labouring to frame and build an Arke to saue him from the flood: and should not we endeuour for the time to come, to spend it wholy in framing a good conscience before God and man, which shal one day saue vs from a flood of miseries?

6 Consider, that a Publicane, Luke 19. 3. who before did exact by extremitie from others, but hauing receiued Christ into his house, became beneficiall vnto

vnto the poore, and was readie to make restitution for all the wrong he had offered.

7 Consider the admonition & absolution that Christ gaue vnto him that was cured by the poole side, Iohn 5. 14. Beholde, thou art made whole, sinne no more.

8 Consider how God doth complaine by his Prophets, against the ingratitude of his people, and how hee accepteth those who are thankfull vnto him, Esay 1.2. I haue nourished children, and they haue rebelled against me. Lu. 17. 18. Christ sayd vnto the Samaritan: Arise, goe thy way, thy Faith hath made thee whole.

9 Consider, that to make an Apostasie from the calling to grace, were great indignitie offered vnto God, and hurt to our selues.

10 Consider how to keepe a watch ouer all thy senses, without which the soule is as a citie without wals, exposed to the inuasion of enemies: or as a vessell without

without a couer, which in the old Law was impure.

Remember how the children of Israel to auoyd the punishment of the first borne of the Egyptians, sprinkled their dore-posts with the bloud of the Lambe: in like manner, to auoide the death of sinne, let vs sprinkle the posts of our hearts with a continuall remembrance of Christs Passion, 2 Cor. 4. I beare in my body the dying of Iesus, saith Saint Paul.

Remember that Elias in the strength of the meate hee ate, did hold out to the mount Horeb.

The

The fruit of this Meditation.

IS, first to acknowledge with all thankfulnesse, Gods goodnesse towards vs: secondly, to apply our selues wholly for the time to come, to serue him in holinesse and righteousnesse all the dayes of our life, that wee may proceed from grace to grace, vntill we come to the state of glory.

The Soliloquie.

REmember (O my Soule) that thou hast bin fed with the foode of Angels, and therfore shouldest not now turne to feede on the huskes of swine, that is, sensuall affections. Thou knowest that wise king Salomon 1. King. 7. 8. would not that his owne wife, who was Pharaohs daughter, should dwell in the house, where the Arke of God was: for he counted it wickednesse, that a woman descending from the stocke of the Gentiles,

enemies vnto God and his people, should inhabite so holy a place. How great wickednesse then should it be, to receiue sin, where God himselfe the Lord of the Arke, is conuersant. In the Arke were conteined the tables of the Law; in my heart let there be euer a desire of fulfilling thy will. When the God of all power and maiestie hath made thee his handmaid, is it not a signe of singular loue and fauour? oughtest thou not to render him again all seruice and dutie? The Patriark Iacob was content to serue seuen yeares, and after that seuen more and all for Rachel: which time notwithstanding, seemed short vnto Iacob himselfe, for the loue he bare to Rachel. Much shorter should the time seeme to thee, wherein thou seruest this Lord: all labours may bee accounted light for his loue, who is more to be beloued then any earthly creature, by infinite degrees. Thou shouldst be happie (O my soule) if thou knewest what dignitie

nity it is to serue so high a Lord. Call to mind how thou hast serued in times past this vaine world, whereby thou hast beene subiect to many perturbations: how many bitter crosses haste thou sustained in this seruice? Now by the helpe of thy heauenly Lord, whom thou hast this day receiued, thou art able to tread vnder-foot all the allurements of thy Ghostly enemies, and become mistresse of thine owne passions. Call to minde that in the Canticles, chap. 5. 3. spoken by the Church, whereof thou art a member. I haue put off my coate, how shall I put it on? Consider that now to serue God is to beare rule. Thinke thou art no longer thy owne, but Gods to whom thou hast consecrated thy selfe. His will, not thine, ought euer to be fulfilled, that in all things thou yeelde humble obedience: and reply with the Apostle: Quid vis me facere? Acts 9. 6. Lord, what wilt thou that I doe?

CHAP. XLII.

Cautions to bee obserued of the deuout Christian, after his receiuing the holy Sacrament.

That hee bee no lesse carefull now after this heauenly repast in the exercises of Deuotion, then he was before in preparing himselfe.

2 That hee vse much silence, and some solitarinesse the same day, that he may be priuate, tibi & Deo, to himselfe and God.

3 That hee retire himselfe from worldly affaires.

4 That he often determine of his future conuersation, to be religious, and fearing God.

5 That he resolue with the Prophet, Psal. 39. 1. Dixi, custodiam vias meas: I said, I will take heed vnto my wayes.

6 That

6 That hee resigne himselfe wholy to Gods pleasure.

7 That he vse all the meanes which be helpefull in this resigning himselfe wholy vnto Gods pleasure: of these meanes some are generall, and some are particular.

1 Amongst the generall, the first is a stedfast purpose not to offend God in this or that sinne from henceforth, wherevnto hee hath beene formerly subiect.

2 It doth much helpe, to flie occasions which are wont to draw men to sinne, as the place of ill company; for it is written, Death entereth in by the windows, Ierem. 9.

3 It doth much helpe to resist temptatiõs in the beginning, to extinguish the first sparke of euill desire, before it inflame the heart: which is done, if we fly to prayer, and meditatiõ of Christs Passion.

4 It also much helpeth to keepe the purpose of not offending God, to heare the word of

God, to read good books: by this meanes the heart of man is recollected.

5 It auaileth not a little to be euer conuersant in the sight of God, to haue this inscription in the house or place of our most abode: Noli peccare, quia Deus videt: sinne not, because God sees thee.

6 A good meane of holy life, is to fly idlenes, the nourishment of vice.

7 Consider, that hauing now cast out Ionah, that is, some sinne of disobedience to God, we should be carefull for the time to come. Why did the holy man Iob make a couenant with his Eies, but that he knew that sight did cause cogitation, cogitation delight, delight consent, and consent would bring forth sinne?

8 Last of all, an effectuall meane against all vice, is the often receiuing the holy Sacrament, which is wont for to strengthen the Soule against temptations.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIII.

Considerations concerning newnesse of life, to be vsed after the receiuing of the holy Communion.

1 LEt the faithfull Christian call to minde, that so often as hee receiueth the holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper, so often hee cleanseth himselfe in the bloud of Christ, which is thereto powerfull: now hauing beene cleansed & washed, let him say with the Wise man, Cant. 5. 3. Lauipedes meos, quomodo inquinabo eos? I haue washed my feete, how shall I defile them?

2 Let him call to minde that it is to small purpose with the sicke man, to goe to the physitian, and by and by, eyther

wilfully to run into a relapse, or not to obserue remedies giuen him for his health.

Now of remedies, or spirituall Antidotes against sinne, some are generall, and some are particular: amongst the generall, the first is, to be as it were, alwaies conuersant in the sight of God, who is the witnesse of all our actions. I meane to bee euer conuersant in the sight of God, is to call to minde that of the Wise-man: In omni loco oculi Domini contemplantur bonos & malos: In euery place the eies of the Lord doe behold the good & the euill. That of the Prophet Dauid; Prouidebam Dominum in conspectu meo semper. I alwaies had the Lord in my sight. That of Tobias to his Sonne: Omnibus diebus vitæ tuæ in mente habeto Deum: Haue God in thy minde all the dayes of thy life. Let this also be written in thy minde, Vertue shall see God.

In the old Law, Almightie God commanded (Num. 15. 38.) the

the Israelites to weare fringes vppon the borders of their garments, that when they did looke vpon them, they should remember Gods commandements, and doe them: surely, in like manner, it shall bee much pleasing vnto God, if with any signe wee are stirred vp to remember the presence of God.

The second is, to meditate at all houres, of the houre of our departure out of this life, according to that of the Wise-man: Memorare nouissima tua, & in æternum non peccabis: Remember thy latter end, and thou shalt neuer doe amisse.

The third is, to beseech Christ not to goe from vs, as the Disciples did Luke 24. because the night of death draweth nigh.

The fourth is, humble, deuout, and continuall prayer, according to that of our Sauiour: Orate, ne intretis in tentationem: Pray, that yee enter not into temptation: and sure, none falleth into temptation, but first hee falleth

from Prayer. Wherefore, that of S. Paul to the Thessalonians is alwayes to bee remembred and practised, Orate semper: Pray continually, 1 Thess. 5. 17.

The fift is, to flie all occasions that draw vs to sin, as vaine sports, euill company, euill aspects of the eyes, by which sinne entreth, as by the windowes, curiositie of hearing, and much verball discourse.

The first is, often to heare the word of God, which doth collect the heart of man, alay passions, and replenish the will with good desires: the reading of religious bookes, and often meditation of the benefits of God. Ioseph saith, How can I sin against my Master, seeing he hath put all that hee hath into my hands?

The seuenth is, in the beginning diligently to resist temptations, shaking off the sparkes of euill cogitations, before they enter and enflame the heart. If a mans enemie stoode at the doore pressing to enter in, & hurt him, who

who so careleſſe of his ſafetie, as to receiue in ſuch an one?

The eighth is, often to call to mind the happines of good men, the calamitie of the euill, and the vanitie of the world: Qui bene viuit (ſaith Origen, Homil. 14. in Leuitic.) eſt verus homo, immo eſt quaſi Angelus: He that liues well, is a true man, yea, rather an Angel.

The ninth and laſt is, a daily and deuout meditation of the paſſion of Chriſt our Lord, calling to minde that of the Apoſtle S. Paul. Heb. 6. 6. that Apoſtates crucifie againe the Son of God.

From the remedies of ſinne in generall, let vs come in the next place to the remedies of ſeuerall vices, or ſinnes in particular.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIIII.

Remedies against Pride and Vaine-glory.

TO represse Pride and Vaine-glorie, it shall helpe a man.

1 That he daily meditate how vile he is in bodie and minde.

2 That he is raised from low estate.

3 That what good soeuer hee hath, he hath it from God.

4 That pride makes a man contemptible to men, and hatefull to God.

5 That God resisteth the proud, as appeareth by Lucifer, Roboam, Nabuchadonezar, Antiochus, Senacherib, and others.

6 That

6 That it depriueth them of ſpirituall goods, eſpecially of grace: hence is that Axiome in Diuinitie, of S. Auſten, Ex ſuperbia oritur Hæreſis, of Pride ſpringeth Hereſie, yea, great euill.

7. That Chriſt our Sauiour hath ſaid: Diſcite ex me, quia humilis: Learne of me, for I am humble.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLV.

Remedies against Couetousnes.

1 Et him consider, that the mind of man is no more satisfied with much then it is with little, and therefore the very desire of riches is rather to be diminished.

2 That Couetousnesse is the roote of all euill, 1 Tim. 6. From hence come warres, hatred, enmity, seditions, and innumerable euils, which turn away the mind from spirituall things, and from God.

3 That he consider the shortnes of his life, and that no mans life consisteth in the aboundance of his riches, as our Sauiour admonisheth, Luke 12. 15.

4 That hee trust in GOD which feedeth the Sparrowes e

young.

young Rauens.

5 That he is a Steward, and not a Lord of temporall riches.

6 That he set before his eyes the example of Christ, and al holy men, who despised earthly riches to be rich in God.

7 That he remember it was spoken by our Sauiour, It is a blessed thing to giue, rather then to receiue, Acts 20. 35.

8 That the best riches are treasure in heauen, Mat. 6. 19.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVI.

Remedies against luxuriousnesse of life.

1 That from hence come diseases of bodie, and griefs of mind.

2 That idlenesse is the cause of this euill.

3 To depart from the companie of those that are wont to excite vnto this euill.

4 To be carefull that we giue not our enemie strength, but by abstinence rather (as the abstaining from strong wines, and hot meats,) to represse him.

5 To repell euill thoughts.

6 To vse much Fasting and Prayer: for this kinde of spirit is cast out by fasting and prayer.

7 To meditate how vaine this

this sinfull pleasure is, how vile, and what is the foulnesse of this sinne.

8 How it hath beene punished by the ouerthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah.

9 That Chastitie is rewardable with God and man: with God, as, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God: with man, Who so loueth pureneſſe of heart (sayth Salomon) the King shall be his friend: yea, the King of glorie shall be his friend.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVII.

Remedies against Anger.

1. O call to minde that of the wiseman: A soft answere appeaseth wrath.

2 To consider how vnbefitting a thing for man wrath is, which makes him fierce as a beast, and furious as a mad man.

3 Let him consider the effects of wrath: which are for the most part, contumelies, out-cries, indignation, blasphemies, & swelling of the minde.

4 Let him consider the punnishment of this vice, qui irascitur fratri, Mat. 5. 22. Whosoeuer is angrie with his brother vnaduisedly, shall bee culpable of iudgement.

6 Let him call to minde how many

many iniuries Christ suffered for vs, from whom all his aduersaries could not wrest not one angrie word: And Christ suffered for vs (saith S. Peter) leauing vs an example, who when hee was reuiled, reuiled not againe, 1. Pet. 2. 21.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVIII.

Remedies against Enuie.

1 Consider how vnprofitable enuie is, which onely vexeth him wch is enuious.

2 That God is the reuenger of wrongs, and that vengeance is his.

3 That we are commanded to ouercome euill with good: That if our enemie thirst, we giue him drinke: for in so doing we heape coales of fire vpon his head, that is, giue him incitements of charity, and prouokments of louing againe.

4 That enuie is against the Law of Nature: for one member will be helpefull to another, as if the foote be sore, the head will looke downe vnto it, the hand

hand will stroke it: now we are all members one of another, as the Apostle teacheth vs.

5 To call to mind that of our Sauiour, Forgiue and yee shall be forgiuen, Luke 6. 37.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIX.

Remedies against Gluttonie.

1 TO consider how soone the delight of meate and drink passeth away.

2 How much it displeaseth God, Ezec. 16. 49. Behold this was the iniquitie of Sodom, Pride, fulnesse of bread, &c.

3 That fasting goeth euermore with prayer and deuotion.

4 That pleasure in meates and drinkes, is the pleasure rather of beasts then men.

5 That Nature is content with little.

CHAP.

CHAP. L.

Remedies against Sloath.

1 TO call vnto mind that GOD hath made nothing to be idle, and that euery thing in Nature doth finish his course by a kinde of motion.

2 That slothfulnesse doth depresse the minde, and causeth a loathing of honest labour.

3 That it is no other but the Sepulcher of a liuing man: for they which doe nothing may bee sayd to be dead, or haue no being amongst men.

4 That as God made the Bird to flie, so man to labour.

5 That labour doth preuent euil, as the vessel that is full, can receiue no other liquor.

7 To

7 To consider that Dauid, not when hee was persecuted of Saul, or when hee was in the warre, fell into sinne, but when he was at home doing nothing. That Salomon not when he was building the Temple, but when hee was at ease and quiet, offended God.

8 That Adam in the state of innocency was appointed to labour.

9 That though some came sooner, some later into the vineyard, Mat. 20. 8. yet all laboured that had the penny in the end of the day. That the ancient Israelites, so soone as they had eaten the paschall Lambe, made speede and hasted to be gone out of Egypt: so the deuout Christian is to vse expedition after this holy Passeouer, and to make haste to be gone from the seruitude of sin, as is before shewed.

CHAP.

CHAP. LI.

The chiefest Figures of the most holy Sacrament.

The first Figure of this reuerent sacrament, is mentioned in Genesis, Chapter 14. 18. When Abraham obtained a noble Victory against those Kings there spoken off, Abraham returning from the victorie (sayth the scripture) Melchisedech the King of Salem, for that he was a priest of the most high God, offered Bread and Wine, and blessed Abraham. But that Melchisedech was a figure of Christ, S. Paul to the Hebrewes proueth, chap. 7. and that the bread and wine offered of him, was a figure of the body and bloud of Christ, which he (being a King and Priest, after the Order of Melchisedech,

Psalme 109.) offered vnto the most high GOD, and afterward left to vs his body spiritually, vnder the shew of Bread, and his bloud vnder the forme of Wine, the holy fathers with one consent, doe teach. But of this figure we learne, as in the most holy Sacrament, wee faithfully receiue Christ, and obtaine a blessing of him, so it is necessary, that first, wee prepare to fight against the vnruly motiõs of our minde, and put away our sinnes by the workes of contrition and confession, as that valiant Abraham cast out the Kings his enemies.

2 A figure of this most royall sacrament, was the Shewbread which was kept on the Table of proposition in the sight of God, Exod. 25. Leu. 24. none were to eate of this bread, but those that were cleane and sanctified, and therefore it was called the holy and sanctified bread, 1 King. 21. Mat. 12. 4. By which is signified, that if we be fed with the sacred bread

bread of the Law of Grace, prefigured by that bread, it is necessary that we be chast, and that we haue a good conscience.

3 A figure of this diuine sacrament, was the Cake baked vnder the ashes, wch the Angel brought to Elias, by vertue whereof he being strengthened, (as the holy scripture, 1 Kin. 19. doth testifie) walked fortie daies and fortie nights, euen to the mount of God, Horeb, where afterwardes hee saw the Lord. This figure doth signifie the power & efficacie, which the holy Communion doth yeeld vs, to finish the troublesome perigrinatiõ of this life, euen vntill wee come to the heauenly hill, where wee shall see God with incredible pleasure.

Now, as common bread doth first, procure the preseruation of the life temporall: secondly, doth augment & strengthen it: thirdly, although often eaten, yet it doth not breede loathsomenesse: yea, rather it is an euill signe, when Bread doth not relish to any

one: fourthly, a feast without bread, although it abound with most costly Dishes, is vnperfect. So this Sacramentall Bread, first, doth preserue a spirituall life: secondly, by cõfirming grace which is the life of the Soule, it augmenteth the same, and maketh it strong against the deuill: thirdly, to men spiritually minded, it neuer bringeth loathsomnesse: but it pleaseth not the palate of the sicke, that is, ex organo male disposito, the palate that is ill disposed: the naturall man perceiueth not the things which are of God, 1 Cor. 2. 14 Fourthly, let the Christian man haue all the goods of this mortall life, if that bee wanting him, which is contained in the holy sacrament, he hath nothing: yea, rather hee may truely bee called miserable: fiftly, and lastly, the bread before it commeth to his perfection, it suffereth many things: for the graine of Corne, which is the matter thereof, is first sowen, and is couered in the earth: then is

cut,

cut, bound as a malefactor, imprisoned in the Barne, is threshed out, winowed, grinded in the Mill, is boulted, and scorched with fire: so that it may very well agree with this Sacrament, wherein the Elements are not whole but broken & poured out, wherin also the passion of Christ our Lord, and his suffering so great things for vs, is represented, before he become this diuine food of our soules.

4 The Paschall Lambe was a figure of this Sacrament, Exod. 12. 3. of which this was the Ceremony. It must be a Lambe without blemish, of a yeare olde, it must bee eaten at Jerusalem roasted, and in hast, with wilde Lettuce, and sweete bread: those who should eat therof must haue their shoes on their feete: by which Ceremony God signified vnto the Jewes, that they were strangers in this world, as wee all are.

S. Chrysostome in his 83. Homily vpon Mathew, applieth that

Ceremonie vnto vs: If (sayth he) the Iewes about to go onely through Palestina, were fed with a Lambe after so curious an order, with what vigilancie ought we to bee fed in this Sacrament, with the true immaculate Lambe, which haue our iourney to heauen? Let vs eate therof in his Church, heate with Charitie, going forward to our Land of rest. In the 25. of Leuiticus, God saith, you shall eate of the old fruit, vntill the new come: so did his people of the old Passeouer: the same day they were deliuered from Egypt, had wee deliuerance from a worser seruitude. Of the Paschall Lambe a bone must not be broken: those parts of this Lambe are the faithfull, as it were from God, Sacrificate Filium, sacrifice my Sonne: so finite hos abire, let these go, Ioh. 18.

5 A figure of this was Manna, giuen to the people of Israel in the Desart, Exod. 16. 16. S. Paul saith, 1 Cor. 10. where hee doth mention the two Sacraments,

ments, that the Red sea, was a figure of Baptisme, and Manna of this holy Sacrament.

Which Manna had these properties:

First, although some gathered much, & others lesse, yet there was a sufficient measure for all, so in this Sacrament of the Lords Supper, there is no lesse vertue in the least part thereof, then in the whole.

Secondly, Manna might bee gathered any day except the Sabboth, and when the sunne arose, it vanished: so this venerable Sacrament serueth vs vntill the euerlasting Sabboth of the life to come, and when the Sunne of glorie shall appeare, it shall then cease.

Thirdly, Manna did giue taste of all kinds according vnto the will of the eater. This Manna hath sweetnes, vnto the faith of the faithful Receiuers, so, and so, disposed.

Fourthly, many of the Iewes were verie grieuously punished,

for that they contemned Manna, saying: Our Soule loatheth this light meate, Num. 21.5. So S. Paul sheweth, 1 Cor. 11. and 30. That in his time many were sicke and weake among them of Corinth, for that this most Diuine Sacrament was despised, and many vnworthily communicated.

6 The first figure was the Arke: for like as the Arke (sayth Thomas Aquinas) was made of Shittim wood, Exodus 25. 10. that is to say, of shining & pure Cedar: so was this of the most pure body of the Sonne of God. Againe, the Arke was guilded within and without, which may resemble the Wisedome and loue of Christ. There were three things in the Arke of speciall note: the golden pot, the rod of Aaron, and the two tables of the Law.

The golden pot containing Manna, may betoken the soule of Christ, containing the fulnes of the Deitie: the rod of Aaron, his

his Priestly power: the two tables, that hee was the Eternall Law-maker.

But the holy Scripture maketh mention of two thinges principally concerning the arke, which doe marueilously appeare in this Sacrament: the one, that by the benefit of the arke the people were not onely preserued, but much prospered: the other, that God grieuously punished those, who vnworthily entreated his arke, or gaue not worthie reuerence vnto the same. We reade, 1 Sam. 4. when the people of Israel in one war against the Philistims, had lost foure thousand men, they procured that the arke was brought into their Tents, hoping by the presence thereof to obtaine the victorie: but the contrary hapned, for the arke of God was taken by the enemy, & thirtie thousand men perished of the hoast of Israel for their peruerse life and small pietie.

The Philistims also, which vnworthily handled the arke, set-

ting it with their Idolatry, how sharply were they punished? but chiefely the men of Asdod, as that holy scripture saith, 1 Sam. 5. the hand of God was grieuous vpon them: but the house of Obededon who receiued the Arke dutifully prospered.

7 A figure of this sacrament was the meale of Helizeus, 1. Kin. 4. When the Prophet commanded that certaine hearbes should be sod for the children of the prophets, they tasting them, found that they were so bitter, that they cried to Helizeus, O man of God, death is in the pot. Wherefore, the holy Prophet cast meale into the pot, wherewith he took away the bitternesse: so Christ by meale or bread of the Sacrament, taketh away the bitternes of our afflictions, and causeth that they bring vs life, and not death.

8 A figure of this most holie Institution, was that great Passeouer which King Hezekiah kept, 2 Chron. 30. 17. when hee prayed for the people, that God would

would be merciful vnto him that prepared his heart to seeke the Lord God of his Fathers, though he were not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuarie: when he spake comfortably vnto the Leuites, and the whole multitude, who kept the Feast with great ioy. Our Hezekiah hath not onely prayed for the purifying of his people, but hath sanctified them, spoken comfortablie, kept a ioyful passeouer, such as neuer was in Israel.

Last of all, a prophesie of this, was that Esay 16. 1. Send yee a Lambe to the Ruler of the world.

CHAP.

CHAP. LII.

Names of excellencie, attributed vnto the holy Sacrament, and gathered out of the writings of ancient Fathers.

O { Great, Inestimable, Diuine, Most noble } Sacrament.

O { Pure, Venerable, Eternall, Laudable } Mysterie.

O Mysterie of { Pietie, Peace.

O { Holy of holies. Blessing. Hidden Manna.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIII.

A short Meditation on these names of excellencie.

WHat couldest thou do (most mercifull Lord) for vs and for our good, that thou hast not don? Thou hast taken our fraile Nature vpon thee, and giuen vs thy Diuine: thou hast freely offered vnto vs the riches of thy mercy, the treasures of thy Grace, the abundance of thy Loue, by this great, inestimable, and most diuine Sacrament, by this blessed, pure, and venerable Mysterie, the Mysterie of peace and pietie, the holy of holies, the hidden Manna: whereby it is euident, with what flames of loue thou didst

didst burne, whose delight is to shew mercie. And because the fire of this loue could no longer be hid, it must needs breake out by this holy mysterie left vnto vs: For which (O Lord) wee giue vnto thee honour, prayse, power, and dominion, now and for euermore, Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIIII.

Certaine short Meditations vpon the Passion, to be vsed before or after the receiuing of the holy Communion.

Good & gracious Iesu, thou diddest eate the Paschall Lambe in Ierusalem, with thy deare beloued Disciples, and arising from Supper, didst gird thy selfe about with a Towell, and powredst water into a Bason, and kneeling vpon thy knees, thou meekly did wash the feet of thy Disciples, and wipedst them with a Towell.

O most good and gracious Iesu: thou, before thou shouldest suffer, diddest bequeath a most excellent good thing vnto thy Children, leauing for vs, thy

thy most sacred bodie to bee our meate, and thy most precious bloud to be our drinke: there can no wit nor vnderstanding penetrate and throughly see the bottomlesse depth of thy Charitie.

O most good and gracious Iesu, thou comming to the garden of Oliuet, beganne st to feare, and to bee heauie, whereupon thou saidst to thy Disciples: My soule is sorrowfull vnto death: And then diuided and sundered from them, thou settedst thy selfe vpon thy knees, and falling vpon the earth flat on thy face, thou praiedst vnto thy Father, and fully and wholly resignedst and yeeldest thy selfe vnto him, saying: Father, thy will be done. And at length, through a most painefull agonie, wherewith thou wert grieuously oppressed and afflicted, thou didst sweate throughout all thy bodie a bloudie sweate.

O good and gracious Iesus, thou, kindled and burning with an ineffable desire to redeeme me, wentst to meete thine enemies, and

and suffered'st Iudas the traitor to kisse thee, thy selfe to bee taken and to bee bound with all confusion and shame, and most vnworthily to be led vnto Annas, where thou suffered'st most meekely to be stricken on thy most innocent face.

O good and gracious Iesu: thou being fast bound like a notorious malefactor, wast led vnto the house of Caiphas the High Priest, where the Iewes most vniustly accused thee, most spitefully strooke and buffetted thee: scornfully wast thou mocked and blind-folded, being bidden to prophesie who struck thee, doing to thee innumerable iniuries all the night.

O good and gracious Iesu, thou, in the Morning wast brought before Pilate, and with most sweete and pleasant countenance, casting thine eies down, stoodest before him in the Iudgment-hall: and when thou wast most falsly accused of the Iewes, and many a rebuke and reproach was

was giuen thee, thou meekely heldst thy peace, and madest no answere.

O good and gracious Iesu, thou wast sent from Pilate to Herod: this Herod of a very curious and vaine minde, coueting to see some miracle at thy hand, asked and demanded many thinges of thee: the Iewes cried out against thee, but thou amongst all these, most wisely heldst thy peace. For this cause Herod and all his despised thee: O how vnmeasurable was this humilitie and obedience? At the will and pleasure of thine enemies, thou wentest forth, thou returnedst again, suffering them to do with thee what they would.

O good and gracious Iesu, thou in the Iudgement hall being stripped naked, and without all compassion, bound fast to a pillar, wast most cruelly scourged, there was thy virginall and tender flesh cut with whippes, and torne with stripes, altogether mangled and deformed with blacke

blacke and blew, and many a wound, ſo that the ſtreames of thy moſt precious bloud ranne downe on euery ſide vpon the earth.

O good and gracious Jeſu, after that ſore & ſharpe ſcourging of thine, to put thee into more ſhame, thou waſt clothed with a purple red garment, vile & torne: they alſo making a crowne of thornes, painefully preſſed the ſame vpon thy moſt holy head: & while the ſharpe thornes pricked grieuouſly, and wounded ſore thine head, thy moſt pure bloud ran downe abundantly ouer all thy louely face & necke, then they putting a reede into thy right hand, & kneeling downe before thee, in ſcorne, ſaluted thee, ſaying: All haile King of the Iewes.

O good and gracious Jeſu, thou waſt brought forth by Pilate vnto the furious Iewes, to be gazed & looked vpon, wearing thy crowne of thornes & purple garment, but they cried out with more cruelneſſe to haue thee crucified,

O

O good and gracious Jesu, thou wast deliuered vp vnto the will and pleasure of the Jewes, who by and by led thee to bee crucified, laying thy heauie crosse vpon thy sore and bloudie shoulders: thus didst thou beare most meekely thine owne crosse, whose great waight pained thee full sore: & comming vnto the place of thy suffering, all wearie and breathlesse with paine, for my sake thou didst not refuse to taste wine mingled with Gall and Myrrhe, which was there giuen vnto thee.

O good and gracious Jesu, when thou wast stripped naked, then were thy sore wounds, by the violent plucking off thy cloathes, renewed. O what a bitter and cruell paine didst thou suffer when th tender handes and vndefiled feete were with blunt and rough nailes fast nailed vnto the Crosse, and when the ioynts of thy limbes were loosed. O with what loue and sweetnesse of charitie didst thou offer thy hands & feete

feete to be bored through: Then out of the wounds of thy hands and feete, as it had beene out of Wels, thy precious bloud plentifully gushed out.

O good and gracious Jesu, thou hanging vpon the Crosse betweene two theeues, wast assailed with Blasphemies, but thou prayedst vnto thy Father the while, saying: Father, forgiue it them, they wot not what they do. Then didst thou promise Paradise vnto the theefe: then gauest thou thy deare beloued Mother, (who pierced with the sword of sorrow, stood by the Crosse) vnto thy Disciple Iohn. After thou hadst suffered three long houres intollerable paines, and thirsted very vehemently, they gaue thee eysell to drink, which when thou hadst tasted, bowing downe thy venerable head, thou yeldedst vp thy spirit. O what a disease was sinne, which nothing could cure, but the death of the Physitian.

O good and gracious Jesu, O good Shepheard, thus thou be-

bestowedst thy self for thy sheepe: the right side of thy bodie was opened with a speare, out of which flowed both water and bloud, mystically resembling the two sacraments. For vs thou wouldest that thy louing and tender heart should be wounded: afterward thy immaculate bodie bee taken downe from the crosse, Ioseph and Nichodemus winding it vp in Sindon or cleane Linnen, laying it in a new Sepulcher: Grant (O Lord) that wee may by faith, lay vp this thy blessed bodie in cleane affections, and in the new sepulcher of a Deuout and Religious heart, Amen.

A Prayer vpon the Paſſion.

O Sonne of the liuing God, moſt mightie, which for the exceeding great charitie that thou didſt beare towardes mee, haſt vouchſafed to be made man, thou wouldeſt for my ſake, bee borne in a ſtable, and laid in a manger, bee fed with the little milke of the maiden thy mother, ſuffer needineſſe and pouertie, be ſore troubled three & thirty yeares with manifold labors and carefull paines: thou wouldeſt for very inward paine and agony be all in a bloudie ſweat, & be apprehended and taken, ſhamefully be bound, vnworthily be condemned, vntuſtly be ſtricken with buffets and blowes, be clothed in purple by way of mockage: thou wouldeſt

dest be beaten and torn most cruelly with stripes, crowned with thornes, ouer-laden with a painfull & heauie Crosse, & be nailed, and fastned to the same Crosse. Thou the cleather and garnisher of the starres, hangedst all naked despised, wounded, and with innumerable sorrows afflicted, vpon the Crosse for my sake. Thou sheddest for me thy most pure and precious bloud: al this thou didest for mee. I embrace in the armes of my soule, thy venerable Passion, I forsake & renounce all sensuall pleasure, I resigne all, put mee wholly into thy hand and pleasure: thine onely will, thine onely will be done in me.

O most sweete and mercifull Iesu, mortifie whatsoeuer liueth sensually in mee, garnish and adorne me with thy merites and vertues: O prepare Lord, a delectable and pleasant habitation for thy selfe in mee: renue my Spirit, my Soule, and my bodie with thy excellent grace: knit me vnto thee most nearely: change and

and transform me altogether into thee, that thou maist haue delight in me. Heare me graciously (O Lord) heare mee graciously, for thine infinite mercie sake, Amen.

O CHAP.

CHAP. LV.

A Prayer of S. Augustine, Meditat. 1. 7.

WHat hast thou committed most sweet Childe, that thou shouldst be so iudged? What hast thou offended most louing Innocent, that thou shouldst bee so hardly intreated? What is thy offence? what is thy fault? what is the cause of thy death, and occasion of thy condemnation? I it is, that am the wound of thy sorrow, the cause of thy slaughter: I am the desert of thy death, the wickednesse of thy punishment, the stroke of thy passion, the labour of thy torment. O wonderfull manner of correction, and order of vnspeakeable mystery! the wicked offendeth, & the iust is punished: the guilty trans-

transgresseth, and the innocent is beaten: the vniust sinneth, and the iust is condemned: that which the euill deserueth, the good suffereth: and what the Seruant committeth, the Lord dischargeth: what Man hath offended, God satisfieth.

Whither, O Sonne of God, whither hath thy Humilitie descended? whither hath thy charitie burnt? whither hath thy pitie proceeded? thy benignitie encreased? whither hath thy loue attained? whither hath thy compassion extended? for I haue don wickedly, and thou art punnished: I haue committed the offence, & thou art chastened with reuenge: I haue done the fault, & thou art subiected to torment: I haue waxen proud, and thou art humbled: I am puffed vp, & thou art diminished: I became disobedient, and thou paiedst the punishment of disobedience: I gaue my selfe to Gluttonie, and thou art afflicted with hunger: The tree carried me to vnlawful

desire, perfect charitie led thee to the Tree of thy Crosse: I tasted of the forbidden Fruit, and thou taiest vnder the torment: I am delighted with meate, and thou laboures at the doore: I enioy delicates, and thou art torne in pieces with nailes: I the sweetnesse of an Apple, thou tastedst the bitternesse of Gall. Eue reioiceth laughing with me, Mary suffereth wailing with thee. Behold the King of glorie, behold my impietie, and thy pittie shineth: behold my vnrighteousnes, & thy righteousnesse appeareth. What (O my King & my God) what shall I render thee for all thy benefits which thou hast bestowed on me? For there cannot bee found in mans heart, which may worthily be rendred for such rewards: can the sharpnesse of mans wit deuise, whereto the mercy of God may be compared? Nor is it the part of the creature to recompence the sufficiencie of the Creator: but there is, (O sonne of God) there is in this ad-

admirable dispensation, to which my owne weaknesse may in some things relie: If my mind pricked with thy visitation, crucifie her flesh, with the vices & concupiscences thereof: and this thing when thou hast granted, it beginneth now, as it were, to suffer with thee: for that thou hast vouchsafed to die for my sin. And so by the victory of the inward man, by thy conduct, it shall bee armed to the outward triumph, for as much as this spirituall persecution ouer-come, it may not feare for thy loue, to yeeld it selfe vnto the materiall sword. And so the smalnesse of my condition, if it please thy goodnesse, shall be able for her power, to answere the greatnesse of the Creator. I pray thee for thy accustomed mercies, poure into my wounds, that the rancor of my viperous infectiō cast forth, may restore me to my wonted health: that tasting the Nectar of thy sweetnesse, it may cause mee to despise with all my heart, the

pleasant allurements of this world, and to feare no aduersitie thereof, for thy sake: and being mindful of my eternall nobilitie, I may loath the windes of this transitorie feare. Let nothing be sweete I pray thee vnto mee, without thee, nothing please me, nothing precious, nothing beautifull beside thee. Let all things I beseech thee, be vile vnto mee without thee, let them bee of no account: that which is contrary to thee, let it be troublesome vnto me, and let thy good will bee my cõtinuall desire. Let it grieue me to reioyce without thee, and delight me to bee sorrowfull for thee. Let thy name be my comfort, and the memory of thee my consolation. Let teares bee my bread day and night in searching out thy iudgements. Let thy law be better vnto me then millions of gold and siluer. Let it be delightful vnto me, to walke in the way of thy commandements vnto the end. So be it.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVI.

The twelfth Meditation.

Concerning the spirituall Communion of Christ.

FOr that the spirituall Communion also is profitable vnto Soules, it is necessare that we enter into some consideration of the same, and therein obserue these circumstances.

First, what it is: secondly, after what meanes it may bee vsed: thirdly, what profit wee reape by it: fourthly, how acceptable it is to God.

For the first, we must know, that as the sacramentall Communion hath worthily the first place amongst the spirituall ex-

ercises of a Christian life: so also the spirituall Communion hath a verie godly and diuine vse.

When the deuout man (saith Gerson) doth euery day receiue spiritually the bodie of his Redeemer: so often doth hee mystically communicate the mysterie of Christs Birth and Passion, is inflamed in his loue, and reuolued in his deuotion: so when wee receiue Christ in affection, and desire of minde (which the faithfull often should doe:) this is called our spirituall Communion.

For the second, what commoditie this bringeth vnto the soule, we may gather by the manifolde effects thereof: for, as hee which moued by the holy Ghost, beleeueth, sorroweth for his sins, and by louing God, desireth to bee baptised, doth obtaine the grace of baptisme: which desire of baptisme, is called by the Diuines, Baptisma Spiritus, the baptisme of the Spirit, so doth it also happen in this spirituall Communion.

The

The third, how we reape profit by receiuing Christ into the holy desires of our Soules, it may bee vnderstood by the encrease of Loue: While I was musing (sayth the Prophet) the fire kindled. The eleuation of the mind vnto God doth take vs away from earthly affections, and carrie vs vnto him, on whom our desires are fixt.

The fourth, how acceptable this is vnto God, we all know: he that accepted the intention of Abraham, and said vnto Salomon, because this was in thine heart, that he doth not onely accept of our good desires, to embrace him in the armes of our affection, but also doth reward this desire as a deede done. But we are to consider, that wee must not onely stay vpon the desire of our will, and receiue Christ spiritually, but we must proceede further, to receiue him together, both spiritually and Sacramentally. For it is not enough to follow Christ in our intention, or onely

to beleeue in him, but wee must also receiue him in this holy mysterie, which is not onely a representation of Christs death, but also a communication thereof, not onely a memory, but a participation: yea, the most perfect participation that may be. Now participation is that holde that Christ hath with vs, & we with him: participation we haue, either by imputation, or by habituall infusion: by imputation, when he is said, to be made vnto vs righteousnesse, 1 Cor. 1. 30. by habituall infusion, when it is said to vs: Wash and be cleane, eate and liue.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVII.

That this holy Sacrament is giuen to the ſicke, as neceſſary for the time of any viſitation.

Conſider, that among the effects of this heauenly Sacrament, that to bee numbred, that it maketh thoſe ſtrong in enduring temptations, which worthily receiue it. Whence it is, that in times paſt it was often giuen to men and women in places of viſitation, or danger of death, that they might bee conſtant in the confeſſion of Chriſt, and able to withſtand the Temptations of the Deuill: to ſtrengthen them in taking the cup of affliction, the manner was to take firſt the cup of ſaluation.

2 Conſider, that it alſo pro-

fiteth

steeth to attaine the health of the body, seeing it is so auaileable to the saluation of the soule. For, if at the only touch of Christs garment many receiued health, what cannot Christ himselfe do, entering into the Soule of the sicke?

3 Consider, that Christ knowing what his Apostles should neede, and what wee all should neede, strength against afflictions: yea, foreseeing our conflicts to come, ordained this most holy Sacrament, for the spirituall helpe of our soules: we must therefore thinke by how much greater necessitie we labour, by so much this Sacrament doth exercise more effectually wholesome effects, seeing it is proper vnto the Lord to helpe more readily then, when greater necessitie doth require.

4 Consider, that here the distressed either in bodie or minde, may apply vnto himselfe in particular, the merites of Christs passion, and raise vp himselfe by a comfortable participation of this

this holy mystery: and say, Thou hast good cause to reioyce (O my soule) that the Lord of Maiestie commeth vnto thee, that he may cõfort thee departing this world, and be thy assistant helpe against the assaults of Sathan, who endeuoureth to draw thee away from the reward of life: continue onely a good will for all: though thou art faint and feeble, though thine enemies be many and mightie, yet hauing receiued diuine strength, thou shalt say: I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me. Cast all thy hope on Iesus, & thou shalt neither be ouercome of them, nor put to shame. Thou knowest well, that the bodie of a certaine dead man was restored to life (2 King. 13.) by the only touch of the body of Elizeus. If the bones of a dead Prophet had so great vertue, that they restored one from death to life, and the theeues amazed by the miracle of the thing, durst do no euill: what will not the liuing and glorious bodie of Iesus do, entring into

into thee? I doubt not, but it will exercise greater might in thee, seeing he is GOD omnipotent, and LORD of all, and the Deuill shall bee ouercome and confounded at his presence.

O good God, teach me how I ought to giue thankes vnto my louing Lord, who seeing me in time of need, beset with infernall Lyons, doth send mee food, not by the Prophet Habakkuk, or by any heauenly Angell, but himselfe commeth to be my food. O Loue without measure.

Consider (O my Soule) this vnspeakeable mercy. Thou knowest thou wast loued of him in his greatest extremities, when he departing out of this life vnto the Father, did institute this holy Sacrament for thy wel-fare. Thou seest also he loueth thee in thy extreamities: it remaineth, that crying out with the Prophet Dauid, Psalme 8. Verse 4. Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindfull of him? Or, with the Apostle,

Apostle, Romanes 14. chap. ver. 8. If I liue, I liue vnto the Lord: if I die, I die vnto the Lord: Whether I liue or die, I am the Lords.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVIII.

What hee ought to doe, who is to communicate, before hee come to the holy Table of the Lord.

HE who will doe the thing which hee ought, concerning this Sacrament, and that which the dignitie of such a mysterie doth require, must lot out a certaine space of time to himselfe, wherein he may performe those things which pertaine to the preparation thereof.

And that wee may discourse more at large of this matter, and more familiarly with thē, which doe often communicate, I say, they shall do very well, if as Moses commanded the people, that three

three daies before they were to receiue the Law, they should prepare themselues. So also they shold prepare themselues in three daies, that they may be apt and disposed to receiue the Lord, who bringeth a law, not of death, but of life: not of the Letter, but of the Spirit: not of Feare, but of Loue.

The holie Scriptures doe testifie, that the maids of king Assuerus, Hest. 2. 12. commingonly into his sight but once in six moneths, prepared themselues with oyle of Myrrh: and other six moneths with certaine sweet odors. If these did doe this, that they might find fauour with an earthly man, what preparation shall be required of vs, that wee may finde fauour in the sight of the true God?

One of the cheefest prayses of the blessed Virgin Marie, for which the Angell did commend her, hee sheweth, when he saith: Thou hast found fauour with God: and ought it to seeme a hard and tron-

troublesome thing vnto vs to do, for so great glorie and dignitie, that which these women haue done for such vanitie? With what face I pray, will wee refuse labour: yea, although all the powers & strength of our soules and bodies were to be employed, that we may come at lest but into the grace and fauour of GOD? specially, when wee heare that these miserable maids spent their whole life, that they might come into the fauor of one mortall man. But because this is an hard thing for vs to doe, at least let vs prepare our selues, in those three dayes whereof I haue spoken, doing all that which in vs lyeth. But if you shall aske me what that is, I say that the first thing is, that thou walke carefully all thy time: that with the holy man Iob, thou feare all thy workes, that thou haue diligent regard of thy selfe, and throughly examine thy conscience, and that thou take heede in all thy conuersation, that thou com-

commit nothing, which may offend the eyes of God, not onely mortally, but negligently also, as much as thou canst. Neither onely ought wee to decline from the sinnes themselues, but also from the occasions of them, as immoderate laughing, pastimes, and wanton sports, and all vaine conuersation, and all those exercises (which are seldome done without sinne. So otherwise (saith a learned man) then a handsome and adorned woman, when on the Sabboth shee hath put on cleane apparell & goeth forth abroad, doth most diligently beware that shee handle not those things wherewith she may be contaminated: So we in this time, ought to walke more carefully then at another, and to be so cloathed, that we may be worthy to come to receiue the King of Angels, and sit at his Table. Before all things the tong must bee kept with diligent care all this time. In the old law the vessels without couers wer counted vn-

vncleane. Let regard bee had, that the mouth vtter no vaine and idle words, much lesse offensiue, that the doore bee kept pure and cleane, through which that heauenly food shall enter to our Soule. No lesse diligently let the heart bee kept pure from all vaine, vncleane, and vnquiet cogitations. For an vnseemely thing it is, in the place where GOD should take vppe his Mansion, to leaue any thing offensiue to his cleane and heauenly sight. And because the place of his abiding is peace, for in peace (saith the Psalmist) is his staying: let vs therefore put farre from vs all vnquietnesse of minde, and perturbations whatsoeuer.

The euening being come, when as thou shouldst communicate earely in the morning following, very laudable it is, either to misse a meale, or at the least to be content with a small or light supper: after which thou mayest not either betake thee to plea-

pleasurable delights, or be present in the concourse of many, but that thou maist be quiet, and more fit to spend a good part of the night in preparing thy minde for the day following.

When thou art laid in thy bed, before sleepe doth close thy eyes, persevere and continue in good thoughts, beseeching God that he would deliver thee from all idle fantasies and illusions of the Devill: that thou maist the next day goe vnto the Lords Table, with more puritie both of bodie and soule. So often as thou awakest in the night, by and by call to minde the same thoughts in prayer.

Very earely in the morning, thine eyes not yet fully opened, thinke that thou art lying in the armes of Christ crucified, exercise thy minde in the remembrance of his Passion, about which we spend the day following: some time thinking of his ineffable love, some time of his extreame suffering: In a word, because

because this sacrament was instituted in remembrance of his passion, most profitable and acceptable vnto God is our deuout remembrance of the same, that by this meanes we may accomplish also the will of the Testator.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIX.

The manner of communicating, vsed by a certaine Virgin.

In pran. vit. sprit.

BEfore the Communion, I prepare my selfe after this maner: some two dayes before, I examine mine owne conscience, I humbly confesse me, and am heartily sorry for my sinnes: when I may not fast, at the least I eate and drinke sparingly.

2 The next morning I begin sooner then at other times a prayer in my minde, therein desiring grace of GOD to communicate sincerely, & that hee make mee such a one as I ought to be, comming to his holy Table that this most holy Sacrament may obtaine in my heart, that fruit

which

which it obtaineth in the hearts of them which worthily communicate.

3 Then I consider how great a thing it is to be partaker of so holy a Misterie, to receiue him whom the Angels adore, the Prophets haue desired, the Apostles loued, the Martyrs imitated, and all holy men coueted, with vnspeakeable desire, to honor, loue, and vnite them vnto him by this holy Sacrament.

4 Moued with this desire, I studie to enflame my soule more largely, by considering Christes vnspeakeable loue: by calling to minde the manifold graces this Sacrament bringeth with it to the soule of the deuout Communicant.

5 When I come to communicate, I exercise my heart in these contemplations: first, I cal to minde my owne vilenesse: secondly, I cast my selfe downe at the feete of Jesus by humilitie: thirdly, I make a short confession of my Faith, as I beleeue that

that thou art the very Sauiour of the world, O blessed Son of God: which wast crucified for me, dead, and buried, descendedst into hell, and didst rise againe: fourthly, I am sorry that I come so little prepared as I do, but euer hoping thee will accept my humble intention, I put my trust in his mercy and merits.

6 Sometimes I talke thus with my soule, saying: Behold, my Soule, thy Lord and God: loue him whom thou desirest with such care, account thy selfe happie, if thou acknowledge him, loue him, and desire him to dwell with thee.

7 Lastly, I lay before him all my sinnes and infirmities hid in the depth of my heart, and I most feruently desire, that hee would pardon them all, and I purpose earnestly to amend, and so with all humble reuerence, I come to the Lords Table.

My demeanour after the Communion.

After the Communion, I betake me to some secret place, that I may talke onely with my Lord, whom I haue by faith receiued into the house of my soule: and first, I set before GOD the Father, the holy Sacrifice of Christ our Lord, & I set before him, whatsoeuer he hath suffered for mee, vsing these or the like words: Behold (O eternall Father) thy Son, whom of thy infinite loue thou hast sent from heauen vnto the earth, that he might take flesh of man, be borne in a Stable, flye into Egypt by the persecution of Herod, and should be in great pouertie. Behold (O Father) what great things he hath done and suffered for vs in the wildernesse, in preaching, in fasting, in praying, in iourneying,

ing, in persecutions of the Iewes, in hearing blasphemies, sustaining iniuries and reproaches: all which he suffered at the hands of the vngratefull Iewes, see him betrayed and solde for thirtie pence. I offer him vnto thee (O holy Father) bound in the Garden, lead away to Annas, beaten and buffeted in the house of Caiaphas, accused before Pilate, mocked of Herod, scourged & crucified of the Iewes. Beholde, (O Father) his head hanging downe, his hands and feete pierced through, his most sacred side opened.

Behold the heauens and earth mourning after their manner, the sorrowfull mother, the deare Disciples bewailing him, and the vngratefull Iewes by so much the more to waxe madde against him: I offer him vnto thee, annointed with Myrrh, wrapped in cleane linnen, buried in a new Sepulcher. These things done, I make an end, praising, blessing and giuing thankes to God, that

he hath loued vs, so that he gaue his onely son for our saluation.

2 After this, I turne me vnto Christ with all thankfulnesse for his benefits, and I open vnto him as vnto a most holy Physitian, my infirmities, and all my faults, as to a most gentle Lord: I open vnto him all my defects, into which I am wont to fall, desiring him to minister a remedie, that I relapse not so often, & specially I pray that he would grant me grace to receiue him hereafter worthily.

3 I purpose to amend, wherein I am wont to offend, & namely, I decree to root out some one sin, and in the place thereof to insert some vertue, whereof I haue neede, that I may alwayes go forward from better to better: & I humbly pray his diuine maiestie, that he grant me strength to execute that thing.

4 Last of all, I diligently keepe my heart all that day, thinking that the Lord resteth therein as his house, wherefore I giue my en-

endeuour, that I may vse all modesty, as well in speaking, seeing, and walking, as in all my outward conuersation: often I say with my selfe: This day (O Lord) thou hast come to mee a sinner, this day thou hast renewed my heart by thy holy Passion, I pray thee abide with mee, goe not from mee. And so applying my selfe vnto the prayers of the day, I vse the same Prayers, with greater Deuotion then ordinarie, I giue thankes for all benefites, especially for those receiued by this most high and holy Sacrament.

CHAP. LX.

Certaine briefe Questions & Answers, concerning the blessed Sacrament.

Question.

For what cause doe you receiue the blessed Sacrament?

Answere.

First, that I may obserue, and dutifully keepe Christs most holy Institution, Secondly, that I may shew my selfe a member of the bodie whereof he is the head. Thirdly, that I may receiue this soueraigne repast to the health of my sinfull Soule.

Quest. What doe you receiue?

Ans. The very body and blood of Christ, after a most diuine and heauenly manner.

Quest.

Quest. What profit haue you by receiuing?

Ans. Increase of grace, and loue with God and man.

Q. Why doe ye often communicate?

Ans. Because my hope is, I am one of Gods Children, and therfore desire to come often vnto him, as to a louing Father.

Quest. After what manner come you?

Ans. By Faith and Repentance, hauing a full purpose to serue him in holinesse and righteousnesse, all the dayes of my life.

P 4 CHAP.

CHAP. LXI.

These few obseruations should bee obserued before our accesse vnto the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

1. YOV must stedfastly beleeue in Christ crucified.

2. You must humble your selfe by a serious consideration of your manifolde sinnes.

3. You must thinke Christ worketh in you that which his words doe promise.

4. You must prepare your Soule to receiue the bodie and bloud of our Lord Jesus.

5. You must meditate of Christs Passion, his resurrection, and your owne rising againe to a better life to come.

6. You

6. You must giue your selfe both before and after this most holy Sacrament, to prayer, and deuotion.

7. You must apply your selfe to meditation, and open to God the closet of your heart.

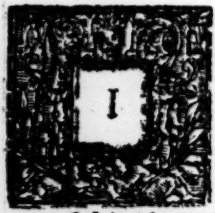
8. You must beare sincere affection and loue, both to GOD and man.

CHAP. LXII.

A dialogue of the most holy Communion, betweene *Mundanus* and *Spiritualis*: a worldly man, and a spirituall.

Wherein is disputed: whether it be better often to communicate, or abstaine from the most holy Communion: how and after what maner both may be done: that of loue and deuotion, this of humilitie and reuerence.

Mundanus.



I know not truely what fruit there is by often communicating: for I see thee continue subiect vnto the same vices to be often angry and threaten.

Spirit.

Spirit. But I know certainly that by the benefit of often Communicating, I haue rooted out some euill maners, and vnlesse I should often Communicate, without doubt, I should bee worse & worse, & happily at this houre I should burne in hell fire.

Mundanus. Whence knowest thou, that thou shouldest be worser?

Spirit. For that I haue experience in my selfe, when the time of Communicating is at hand, I bethinke my selfe more & more carefully to abstaine, yea, from the least sinnes. Contrary-wise, when the time of Communicating is farther off, I am not so collected in minde, I waxe also faint in Deuotion, I am prone vnto vanities and trifles: and if no other profite should come vnto my Soule, that profite alone ought to be sufficient, to moue me to frequent this diuine Sacrament.

Mund. But I feare not a little, lest if I come too often to the Lords

Lords table, I make shipwracke both of loue and feare, for that is wont to fall out by too often vse and familiaritie.

Spirit. Yea, rather the contrarie doth often fall out: for if of the often and familiar custome and frequentation of the Communion, any imperfection were therein couered, there were iust cause to diminish our loue and feare toward him, as it commeth to passe in humane things: But that thing is not so: for when he whom we receiue, is a certain infinite Sea of all perfection, by howe much one vseth this often familiaritie with him, by so much the more hee declareth his goodnesse and perfections, and causeth that loue, feare, and reuerence toward his diuine Maiestie, doe equally encrease.

Mundan. Let it bee as it is, daily experience teacheth, that the often vse of a thing, although the best, doth breed contempt and loathsomnesse.

Spirit. But that is in things tempo-

tempozall, and in ſenſuall pleaſures, but in ſpirituall delights, (as S. Gregorie hath well obſerued) facietie doth breede a deſire: for then the goodnes of them is made knowne: and therefore by howe much the more ſurely they are poſſeſſed, by ſo much the more ardently they are deſired: whence the heauenly Wiſedome ſaith: They which eate me do ſtill hunger, and they which drinke mee doe ſtill thirſt.

Mund. But S. Paul ſaith: He that eateth and drinketh vnworthily, eateth and drinketh his owne damnation, but if thou communicate often, it ſeemeth thou thinkeſt thy ſelfe worthy: and is not this pride? Thou alſo doeſt vnworthily communicate.

Spirit. Is it to communicate ſeldome, doth make a man worthy. It is not ſo: but heare me: if thou call him worthy whoſe perfection doth equall the worthines of this ſacrament, then no creature, although the holieſt, yea nor all creatures put together, were

were worthy of this sacrament. And if such worthinesse were so necessarie, none should communicate: for that none can attaine perfection equall to this Sacrament. But neither that any bee worthy, is it necessary that hee attaine some excellent perfection or be endued with rare vertues; for these are acquited by the rare vertues of this sacrament, & frequenting therof. Therefore that a man be worthy according to the aduice of the Apostle S. Paul, it is enough that he bring that preparation wherewith God is contented, that is, that first he examine his conscience, be sorry for his sinnes committed, humbly cõfesse them with a penitent hart, & with this preparation to come to the Communion is no pride.

Mundan. If this be sufficient, wherefore then did certain godly men of reuerence, speake so often of effectuall preparing thẽselues, as they haue done?

Spirit. These of humilitie and reuerence to this holy Mysterie, haue

haue spoken indeede of solemne preparation, which assuredly is meete, but to the matter in question, frequenting of this holie Communion, is a most auncient custome, wherewith the Church of Christ first sprang, as Saint Luke the Euangelist, in the Acts of the Apostles sheweth.

Mund. But in the Primitiue Church the feruentnesse of Christians was great, which when it is not now in vs, it seemeth more safe to abstaine from often communicating: for if it bee otherwise, it is in danger that we come not so disposed to Communicate as wee ought. The safer way, is rather to be held, then the lesse safe.

Spirit. Yea, the selfe same thing, for that so great desire is wãting in vs, ought to driue vs to frequent this wholsome sacrament: for by the benefit thereof, we may both ware hot, and bee set on fire. For he which is cold, ought rather to betake himself to the fire, then he which is hot. So often

often as one humbleth himselfe before God, & hath a firme faith in Christ, and a good intention to liue holily, it is well.

Mund. I haue often heard the Sacraments are instituted of Christ as medicines, but we vse not medicines often.

Spiri. If a man were spiritually sick but somtimes, then the argument were auailable: but whereas we are in a Quotidian of sinne, and our nature is weake: for, the iust falleth seuen times a day, (saith the Wiseman) our nature therefore often needeth helpe, and so the vse of a spirituall medicine. Moreouer, whereas this sacrament is of force to draw away all these euilles, both present and to come, from the soule, it is better to preuent infirmity, then to cure it once contracted. Lastly, there is a great difference between corporall medicines, and this spirituall: for they onely put away bodily diseases, and often with the euill humors take away the good also: but this onely bringeth

geth to the soule, grace, strength, and other heauenly gifts: & therfore these, seldome, this often is to bee vsed. Adde, that for the most part, bodily medicines are bitter & loathsome, to the intent, that as seldom as may be, we vse them: but this is sweete and delightfull, and therefore GOD would, that it be often receiued of vs.

Mundan. But thou canst not denie, to abstaine from the holy Communion, for reuerence of so great a Sacrament, to be a good act, and agreeable to vertue.

Spirit. I denie not, but that it is good to giue reuerence to it: yet this I say, that to frequent this Communion of deuotion, & desire of vniting himselfe with Christ, is a better action, because this springeth of loue, but that of feare, & it is manifest to all that loue is better then feare: wherefore it argueth a religious mind to communicate often.

Mund. But I am vnworthy so to doe.

Spirit.

Spirit. Wherefore?

Mund. Because I fall daily into many sinnes.

Spirit. If sinnes detaine thee then shouldest thou neuer communicate, because thou neuer ceasest to sinne.

Mund. But communicating seldome, I haue more time to examine my selfe.

Spirit. Thou art deceiued: for seeing our nature is prone to euil by how much the more grieuously sins raigne in it, by so much the harder they are to be gone: for, a crooked tree, the longer the turning thereof is deferred, by so much the more hardly, and with greater pain it is made straight.

Mund. I doe not well vnderstand what this my error is: for, I see daily with mine eyes, those which often cõmunicate, to come coldly and without deuotion, and as it were, customarily to the holy Table, and no more adoe: but they which come seldome, come with farre greater deuotion and reuerence, as it seemeth to me, where-

wherefore it is better to communicate seldome then often.

Spiritual. First, that is false Mundanus, which thou affirmest: yea, rather many of them which come so seldome, come most coldly without deuotion, without feeling of loue, rather indeed of custome and constraint, then of loue.

Mundanus. If it bee better to Communicate often then seldome, how commeth it to passe that this often Communicating is not praysed of some learned men.

Spirit. I neuer saw nor heard of any learned man endued with iudgement and vertue, that reprehended this action, so holy, so profitable, so acceptable to God: but that it is dispraysed of some carnall men, it is no maruaile, for they thinke others vnworthily Communicate this Sacrament: for as they liue euilly themselues, so they thinke that those liue euilly also, who often communicate.

Mund.

Mundan. You say true: I acknowledge that it is more late, often to strengthen the Soule with this heauenly foode, but I doe it not, least I giue occasion to the Worlde, of whom those that often communicate, are had in derision.

Spirit. If in this matter thou wilt haue a regard of the world, then hast thou not onely lost thy soule, but also thy wit. Art thou ignorant, that it is the propertie of the Worlde, to flye from all spirituall things, to fauour the wicked, and speake euill of the good?

Mund. As long as we are in this world, wee ought to frame our selues, and conform our maners to the world.

Spirit. But that is manifest foolishnesse. If the world be one of thy three capital enemies, how maist thou apply thee to it, and obey the will thereof, without manifest and apparant ruine? Knowest thou what it is to abstaine from the sacred Communion,

nion, for the obloquies of the world: No other thing then to be ashamed, and to account it a reproch, if thou art a good Christian, and endued with vertue: wherefore, and worthily too, may Christ be ashamed to receiue thee into heauen.

Mund. If I should often communicate, I must repent often, become a good example vnto others, keepe me at home, cast off all recreations: which were to take away all my libertie from me, and so I should pine away, and wax old before my time.

Spirit. Although thou communicatest but once in a yeare: thou art bound to repent, to giue good example to others: neither art thou ignorant, how great a sinne it is, to giue a scandall to others. And the often communicating, doth not take away Recreations, but doth allow them, so they be lawfull and honest. In that thou saist thy libertie is taken away, it is not true: for, if thou doest thinke any thing for-

bidden,

bidden, lawfull vnto thee not communicating, thou art deceiued: for whether thou communicate often or seldome, thou art bound to abstaine from sinne. He which for Recreation offendeth his Creator, loseth true libertie, when he maketh himselfe a seruant to sinne: yea, he loseth true ioy, which springeth of a good conscience, which saith Salomon, is a continuall feast, & in a feast there is ioy: and this the foolish world doth not vnderstand.

Mund. To the receiuing of this most holy communion, it is required, that a man be of a quiet mind, which cannot be commonly brought to passe, for the aduersities and perturbations of this world, it is not conuenient therfore often to communicate.

Spirit. Yea, rather the afflictions of this world, & this wretched place of exile, ought to driue vs to Communicate often. For, amongst the effects thereof, this one is mentioned, that it giueth strength in aduersity, as the pro-

phet

phet signifieth, when hee sayd: Thou hast prepared a Table in my sight, against those that trouble mee.

Mund. If I did perceiue, I were called of God to Communicate often, I would willingly obey.

Spirit. I pray when thou commest to thine ordinary prayers, thou goest to Church, doest thou perceiue thou art called of God?

Mund. No.

Spirit. Why then dost thou these things?

Mund. For that they seeme to me good things, and are laid downe as parts of Gods worship.

Spirit. But the holy Communion without question, is better then all, and more commended: and is so profitable, as it is called of the Church, the pledge of future glorie.

Mundanus. Howsoeuer the matter is, to say truth, I dare not come often to this heauenly table, by reason of my manifolde im-

imperfections that I often fall into.

Spirit. It hath beene answered to this before: either thou desirest to be deliuered from thine euils, or not. If thou desirest to be rid of them, this most holy sacrament, receiued with due preparation, will minister such strength, that thou maist by little and little remoue them: as it is euident many haue done, who by the vse of this spirituall meat, of carnall haue beene made spirituall.

Mund. I yeeld to thy reasons, and would gladly communicate, but I feele no deuotion.

Spirit. Perchance thou thinkest, thou hast no deuotiõ, vnlesse thou shed forth teares: that is not absolutely necessarie, neither in these consisteth all deuotion: the teares of the heart may suffice, that is, sorrow for thy sins past, and a purpose to preuent those to come. Moreouer, he is called deuout, which in all things conformeth himselfe vnto Gods will:

where-

wherfore I would not that thou shouldest therefore abstaine, because teares and sighs are wanting: for these are not alwayes necessarie, God giueth them to whom he pleaseth.

Mund. To say what I thinke, and that I may confesse a truth, thou hast plainly perswaded me, that it is better to communicate often, then to abstaine: but one thing yet remaineth, I am loath to acknowledge my sinnes.

Spirit. If wee acknowledge our sins, God is iust to forgiue vs our sinnes, 1 Ioh. 1. 9.

Mund. Many businesses doe occurre, which hinder this so waightie a matter, I meane the worke of repentance.

Spirit. This is the temptation of the deuil, who that he may spoile thee of the fruit of this diuine Sacrament, causeth that repentance seemeth troublesome vnto thee, and the whole preparation to the holy Communion. Furthermore, businesses doe not hinder good workes, the busines-

ses of greater moment, are to be preferred before the lesse. There is time to dispatch earthly affaires in good order. When the Sonne of God standeth & knocketh at the doore of thy heart, open vnto him, let him not knocke in vaine. To conclude, remember that the kingdome of heauen suffereth violence, whence we see, we must labour to attaine the same.

Mund. It is euen so, I must needs confesse I am ouercome: wherefore my resolution is, with Gods good grace to repaire often to the blessed Sacrament.

Spirit. Then shalt thou doe that which appertaines to a Christian to doe.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXIII.

Another Dialogue, wherein is discussed the Doctrine and benefit of the blessed Sacrament.

The Speakers.

Catechumenus. Doctor.

Catechumenus.

I Desire to bee instructed in the doctrine of the holy Sacrament.

Doct. I confesse in regard of the spirituall consolation we reape by this holy mystery, thou maist well desire to be instructed in this doctrine, but for my part there is no doctrine wherein I more feare to deliver my mind then this, because the

more I consider of it, the more I admire the excellency thereof, which to me is more then words can expresse.

Catecu. I can be content to submit my selfe to the iudgement of the learned, without curious questioning.

Doc. It is well as thou saiest, I had rather by far commune with the humble in this case, then any other that is ouer-curious. The goodnesse of God herein should with reuerence be admired.

Catecu. I rest satisfied in this case: but I would learne of you, what might moue me to loue the giuer of so great a gift.

Doc. Thou speakest religiously, for words of deuotion in this case, are sweeter then hony, or the hony combe. Now for the meanes to loue the Author of this gift, is to consider his bountie, how he doth herein offer himselfe vnto vs, & all the benefits of his blessed suffering.

Catecu. I am moued with incredible ioy, to thinke of the in-

vnmerable benefits wee receiue hereby, and it stirreth mee vp to reuerence and ioy.

Doc. It may well doe so, for what ioy is here offered vnto the faithfull, the faithfull doe finde: what may they not hope for at his hands who hath giuen himselfe vnto them? what prouokements to loue and hope we haue hence, there needes no long Discourse to manifest and shew.

Catecu. I acknowledge my selfe satisfied, beseeching God to make mee a dutifull Receiuer of this most holy mysterie, euen for his mercies sake.

Doc. To be a dutifull receiuer, thou must before and after receiuing giue thy selfe much to prayer, and obserue other duties appertaining vnto a carefull Christian.

CHAP. LXIIII.

A Prayer before the receiuing of the Communion.

GOD, the Creator of all things, omnipotent Father, whose beginning, had no beginning, whose end doth exclude all end, whom all things do acknowledg their Author: I miserable and vnworthy sinner, now about to repaire to the high feast of our Lorde Sauiour Iesus Christ, haue a troubled heart, a soiled bodie, a polluted tongue, a wounded conscience: I am greatly amazed, and I know not what to choose: if I come not, I flie life: if I come vnworthily, I procure damnation. O high diuinitie: O fearefull maiestie:

O

O pious mercie: whither shall I goe? or whither shall I flie? O wretch that I am: what shall I do? I haue sinned against heauen, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy sonne: all sorrowfull and sighing, I strike my breast, and groaning, say: woe is me vile sinner, I haue lost that which appertained to a sonne, but thou stil hast that that belongeth to an indulgent Father: pardon therefore, O Father, pardon, O most gentle Father, me thy prodigall sonne, though late returning, reach out thy hand of mercy from on high, and receiue me in peace and fauour, which liueth and raigneth God from euerlasting, Amen.

Another Prayer before the Communion.

OMnipotent and mercifull God, behold I an vnworthy sinner, doe come to the most holy Sacrament of the body and bloud of our Lord Iesus Christ, I come (I say) as the sick man to the Physitian, as the vncleane to the fountaine of mercie, as the blinde to the light of eternall brightnesse, as a poore beggar to the King of glorie, as the naked to the Lord of heauen and earth, as the needy to the riches of heauen and earth. I beseech the abundance of thy pittie to heale mine infirmitie, to wash my foulenesse, to enlighten my blindnesse, to inrich my pouertie, to clothe my nakednesse, that I may receiue thee, the bread of angels, the King of Kings, & Lord of Lords. Grant that I may receiue thee with such respect and reuerence, with such contrition and feare, with such faith and purity,

purity, with such a purpose and humilitie, as is expedient for the health of my soule.

O Lord and Father, giue to me (I beseech thee) an vnworthy Guest, not onely to receiue the Sacrament, but the vertue of the Sacrament. O most gentle God, grant me to receiue the bodie and bloude of thy onely begotten Son, that I may be incorporated into his mysticall bodie, and be accounted as a member of the same. O most louing Father, grant mee for to receiue thy dearely beloued son, and that whom I now receiue, as it were couered with a vaile, I may one day behold in glorie, who liueth and raigneth with thee and the holy Ghost, one GOD, world without end, Amen.

A thankesgiuing after the Communion.

I yeeld thee thankes, O Christ Iesu, for thine ineffable loue, that by thy death, thou diddest redeeme mankind, I beseech thee suffer not thy bodie to be broken, and thy holy bloud to be shed in vaine for me, but with thy blessed bodie feede my soule, with thy bloud quicken my spirit, that encreasing by little & little, I may become a fit member of thy Church, which is thy mysticall body. and grant that I neuer depart from that holy league, but may continue therein, seruing thee in holinesse and righteousnesse all the dayes of my life, Amen.

An

Another thankesgiuing after the Communion.

What tongue, or what minde is able to giue thee sufficient thankes (O Lord Jesus) for thy ineffable loue towards vs? who to redeeme man, didst become man: thou tookest vpon thee all the iniuries of our condition: & last of all, as a Lambe without spot, wast offered vpon the Altar of the Crosse: all was to reconcile vs to thy Father. And not content with this thy bounty towards vs, but least the memory of so great loue should decay, thou sitting in heauen, doest by thy holy mysteries refresh our soules here in earth.

Dauid to shewe his loue to Ionathan, did honour his sonne by receiuing him vnto his Kingly Table: but how hast thou honoured

for my great ingratitude I will rather breake of from all the desires of the worlde and the flesh, rather then commit that which shall offend thee.

O thou which art the authour and preseruer of my life, I detest all workes of sin because they offend thee, I firmely purpose not to commit them againe.

My most faithfull protector if repenteth mee that I haue done euill in thy sight, from hencefoorth, I will doe mine endeuour to abstaine from sin.

I would not O Lord provoke thee to anger any more, for all the riches in the world, yea though I were to suffer a painefull martydome.

I haue gone astray O infinite and eternall good of my soule, I haue departed from thee, for which I repent mee, I will not depart from thee any more, but will serue thee with all faithfull seruice.

O infinite goodnes I would

to

to God I had neuer so displeased thee, I will neuer more returne to the vomit of sinne, but I will bethinke mee how I may please thee.

O mercifull LORD thou which madest Zacheus of a Vsurer, to become a iust man. Thou that madest Mathew of an extortioner, a contemner of the world. Be mercifull vnto mee, who doe desire nothing more then truely to serue thee, for the time to come.

When the great Patriarch Abraham had obteined the victorie against his enemies, the King of Salem whom we call Melchisedech, for a thankesgiuing he offered bread and wine vnto Abraham, and withall to refresh his Souldiers.

Wee haue offered vnto God in the celebration of the Lords Supper, our soules and bodies as a reasonable sacrifice to serue him, here also we receiue refreshing against our Ghostly enemies.

God

God taught his people to eate the figuratiue Lambe in haſt, and forthwith to get them out of Egypt, we ought by the Figure to diſcerne that which was figured, and without delay to get vs from the Egypt of a ſinfull life.

In the 5. of the *Canticles* and at the 3. *verſe*. The Spouſe ſayth, I haue put off my coate? how ſhall I put it on? I haue waſhed my feete, how ſhall I defile them?

In like maner may the faithfull Soule ſay, I haue put off a ſinfull courſe of life? how ſhould I put it on againe, I haue repented me of ſinnes committed, how ſhould I commit them againe?

Lord grant me the aſſiſtance of thy grace that the reſt of my life may be pure and holy, ſo that at the laſt I may come to thine euerlaſting glory, Amen

CHAP.

CHAP. LXV.

Causes why the daily communion, or the celebration of the Lords Supper, euery Sabboth day is not now in vse, as it was in the primitiue Church.

1 OR that this was a precept of the Church, as Origen and S. Ierom doe testifie, like as that was of forsaking temporall riches: or temporary, or as fit for that age of the Church.

2 For that it was agreeable to the small number of Christians: so that this custome did by little and little decrease, as the number of Christians daily multiplyed.

3 For that those times, were times of persecution, and therefore the Christians liued in a continuall farewell (as it were) from the world.

4 For

4 For that the charitie of those times farre exceeded ours that now liue: to wit, loue to God & men: they would haue lamented their estate, if that their daily bread should haue become a yearly bread.

5 For that they then had a more feeling of the effects of this holy Sacrament: to wit, how it did minuere sensum in minimis peccatis: and how it did tollere consensum in grauioribus, as S. Bernard speaketh, take away the sense in lesser sinnes, by not committing them at all, and consent in greater.

6 For that the perfection of Christians in the primitiue Church was farre greater: and therefore assuredly, the more often a Christian doth repaire to the holy Communion, the greater is his perfection, and the nearer doth hee come to the pietie of the ancient Christians.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXVI.

An exhortation vnto the holy Communion, mooving euery deuout Chriſtian to repaire often vnto the ſame.

I hope (Gentle reader) thou perceiueſt well, how much more excellent and profitable a thing it is, often to receiue the moſt bleſſed body of Chriſt in the Euchariſt, then to abſtaine from a meat ſo healthful and nouriſhing vnto life. One thing yet remaineth, that thou throughly regarding the vnſpeakeable fauour and bountie of ſo great a King, ſo cheerefully, and ſo bountifully calling thee to his marriage-feaſt, when hee ſaith: Take and eate, this is my body: and againe, doe this in remembrance

brance of me) shouldest therefore with all speed and often, repaire vnto this banquet, least thou fall into the fault of ingratitude, and bee shut out of the Kingdome of heauen, as those were, who are mentioned in the Gospel to haue bin bidden to the wedding Dinner) if thou absent thy selfe, thinking to excuse it.

This is the marriage feast of the King of heauen: the banquet is spirituall, whose Bread doth strengthen mans heart, & whose wine doth inflame the soule with heauenly ioy: and the meat thereof is the flesh of Christ, saying: My flesh is meat indeede. This is that healthfull foode of Angels, sent downe from heauen, hauing in it all delight & sauoury sweetnes. This is that fat Bread, which giueth pleasures for a king This is the most plentifull bread of good nourishmēt about all that the earth yeeldeth. This is the bread of the offering of the first fruits. This is the bread signified as well in the Cakes which

which Abraham did set before the Angels, as also in the Shewbread: and this was likewise deciphered in the bread and wine wch Melchisedech brought forth. Lastly, this is that bread baked vpon the coales, in the strength whereof Elias did walke fortie daies & forty nights, vnto Horeb the mount of God. This is that tree of life, planted by almightie God in the midst of the earthly Paradise, whose fruit being eaten, would preserue bodily life. This is that Paschall Lambe without spot, by whose bloud stroken vpon the two postes, and the doore cheekes, the children of Israel were in times past, deliuered fro the hand of the Angell that smote the Egyptians. This is that kid which Manoah offered vnto the Lord vpon the stone. This is also that hony combe, which Ionathan dipping the tip of his Rod therein, did put to his mouth, and his eies were enlightened. This is also that large flowing stream of water, which sodainly issued out

out of the rocke, after that Moses had stricken it with his rod.

Come freely therefore to this most sweete banquet of Christ Jesus, wherein is promised vnto thee most assured life and saluation. For if the Garments of Christ, and if napkins and partlets brought from Paul, did euen with the least touch thereof giue health, how much more then shal the very bodie of Christ, being worthily receiued, deliuer thee from all thine infirmities and wicked affections? If at christs onely word, Lazarus hauing bin foure dayes in the Graue, was raised vp from the dead, how much more shall Christs bodie being eaten of thee, giue life vnto thee, and purge thy conscience, quickening thee from the death of sinne?

Oh therefore (faithfull soule) if thou be vncleane, come to the fountaine of puritie: if thou be hungry, come and feede of the bread of life, which fadeth not, and filleth the hungry soule with

goodnesse. Art thou sicke? this will be a most soueraigne medicine for thine infirmitie. Hast thou an issue, whereof thou canst not be cured by the Physitions? touch thou in full assurance of faith, (as did the woman in the Gospel, sicke of the flux of blood) the hem of Christs garment, euen the most blessed Sacrament, and thine issue shall be stayed. If thou feele thy selfe to be stung by the serpents of peruerse temptations, looke vppon that brazen serpent, in which there was no poyson, euen Christ hanging vpon the Crosse. Doest thou make thy moane, that thou art blind, weake, and lame? Thou must then remember that such are bidden to the supper of the great King, & are compelled to goe in. But thou wilt say, I am waueringe (alas) & vnconstant: yea, but this Bread doth strengthen the heart of man. Art thou sorrowful and in perplexity? this wine doth make ioyful the inward man. Do many things trouble thee? cleaue fast

fast to him who calmd the waues of the Sea when they were troubled. Goest thou astray from thy Lord and Maister? yet maist thou walke in the strength of this meat, euen to the mount of God.

These wonderfull thiugs doth the holy Ghost in the scriptures, and the holy ones of God, being inspired by the holy Ghost, speak of this admirable Sacrament, whereof S. Cyprian in his Sermon of the Lords Supper, most learnedly & religiously writeth: This vnleauened bread which is the true and sincere meate, doth by the Sacrament sanctifie vs, by the receiuing of it, it doth enlighten vs with faith, and confirmeth vs with truth towardes Christ. Therefore let all those, which loue the Lords Passion, come vnto this most wholesome bread, and let them not feare to eate of this most sweet Manna, so often as they can, wherby they may bee made able to passe through the wildernesse of this world,

world, without danger of their life. Let him not feare to eate of this healthfull bread, whosoeuer desireth to haue his heart made strong in the Lord, that hee may ouercome all those most wicked enemies, the deuils, which daily lie in waite, to hinder our saluation. Let no man make doubt, so often as possibly he can, to eat of this most sweet, delightful, comfortable bread, which was made in the wombe of the Virgin, and baked vpō the altar of the crosse, in the strength whereof wee shall be made able in fortie dayes and fortie nights (that is to say, in the short time of this transitory life) to walke, not onely to mount Horeb, which signifieth a Desart, but euen to mount Tabor, which is the brightnesse and the glory of God.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXVII.

Of the ſpirituall hunger we haue, or ought to haue, often to Communicate, and inducemnts vnto the ſame.

1 CONſidering our great neceſſitie. 2 The great profit that doth heereby come vnto vs.

3 The admirable facietie it yeeldeth vnto the diſtreſſed ſoule.

4 For that it inciteth to the ſtudie of pietie.

5 For that it enlighteneth the vnderſtanding.

6 For that it addeth ſtrength to our weakneſſe.

7 For that it maketh glad the Conſcience.

8 For that it is our viaticum, or food at the end of our iourney.

For

For the affecting of the conſcience, three things are principally to be thought vpon in the very time of Communicating.

The eternall loue wherewith God the Father loued vs, when as yet wee were not, and prouided all things neceſſary for vs.

2 The inestimable loue of God the Sonne, who gaue himſelfe for vs.

3 The vnſearchable loue of God the holy Ghoſt, that euery moment doth preſerue vs.

Chriſtian

Christian considerations to bee thought vpon by euery one of vs, both before and after the holy Communion.

Before.

1. THat we call to mind, that Almightie God appeared to Moses in the burning bush: So doth he also to them, whose hearts are enflamed with loue of him.

2. That if in the law so many purifications were vsed, then in purifying our hearts vnder grace, much more is required.

3. That if Salomon tooke such care to build a Temple for the Arke of the Lord: what care ought there to be for the Lord himselfe?

4. That the foure Questions proposed vnto Ionah, Ion. 1. 9. The first, Quod opus tuum, what is

is thy worke, or trade; the second, Quæ terra tua, what is thy countrie; the third, Quò vadis, whether goest thou? the fourth, Quis populus tuus? What is thy people, or with whō liuest thou? That these Questions, I say, proposed to Ionah, euery Deuout Communicant ought to propose vnto himselfe: as thus,

What is thy worke? to doe the will of God, or thine owne will? What makest thou thy countrie, Heauen or earth? Whether goest thou, after God or the world? What is thy people, conuersest thou with good or euill men?

After.

FIrst, to be carefull not to receiue the grace of GOD in vaine.

Secondly, to resigne, or consecrate the rest of our life to serue God, liuing although in the flesh, yet not according vnto the flesh.

Thirdly, we ought to weigh with our selues, the reasons why our life is to bee dedicated to God: First, for that of him wee haue life, secondly, for that hee preserues vs in life, thirdly, for that hee died to preserue vs in life, fourthly, for that hee hath prepared for vs for the time to come euerlasting life.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXVIII.

Deuout considerations to bee vsed after the receiuing the holy Sacrament.

1 COnsider with what honour thou art prosecuted by receiuing this holy pledge, in regard whereof all earthly honours are to bee contemned.

2 Consider whilst thou dost communicate, thou art become a Temple of the holy Ghost, and that Salomon much reioyced when he saw the building of the Temple finished, which was but a materiall Temple, and hast thou not cause to reioyce in this Temple, which is spirituall? In this Temple thou oughtest often to prayse God, and casting

out euill thoughts, to say: My soule is the house of prayer.

3 Consider, that thou by often receiuing, doest become a liuing sepulcher of Christ liuing: thinke if thou hadst bin present when he was taken downe from the Crosse, and beleeuing he was thy Sauiour, surely thou wouldest haue bin glad to receiue his bodie in to thy house: but in the Eucharist thou maist often receiue him, not dead, but liuing.

Medita-

Meditations accommodated to the seuerall parts and petitions contained in the Lords Prayer, in all which the grace of perseuerance is implored.

Our Father.

O My Father, what wilt thou I aske of thee, being an euill Sonne? Behold, I aske of thee the spirit of thy Son, that without seruile feare, and with much cõfidence, I may receiue thee in the most holy sacrament.

Which art in heauen.

Lord giue me a taste of that felicity which all thy Saints inioy with thee in heauen, that from henceforth I sauour not earthly things by earthly meates, but in this heauenly foode, I may sauour heauenly things.

Hallowed be thy name.

Giue me grace, that for this benefit I may giue thee laud and prayse, and sanctifie thy Name: grant that in all my actions, I may seeke not mine owne, but thy glory

Thy kingdome come.

Euerliuing raigne in my heart, which I doe offer vnto thee for a gift: let not sinne, let not the flesh, let not the Dominion of Satan rule there, but thy grace onely.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heauen.

Teach me to doe thy holy will in euery place, t me, busines, readily, willingly, ioyfully, as thy Saints doe in heauen.

Giue vs this day our daily bread.

I beseech thee O Lord, to grant me an ardent desire towards this holy Sacrament, the true bread of Angels, and a true intention of heart to conceiue it.

Forgiue vs our trespasses, as we forgiue them that trespasse against vs.

Giue me remission of all my sins

an

an hatred of the same, and a readinesse for the love of thee, to forgiue all iniuries offered me.

And lead vs not into temptation.

Giue mee grace to withstand the assaults of my ghostly enemie, and both in aduersitie and prosperitie, euermore keepe constancie of minde.

But deliuer vs from euill.

Deliuer vs from all our sinnes, that we may be ready to be presented vnto thee at all times.

For thine is the kingdome, the power, and the glorie, for euer and euer, Amen.

Thou O Lord, art worthie to receiue honor, and praise, and dominion, for euermore, Amen.

Of the vigilant care that a Christian ought to haue of not falling away from a good and godly course of life.

COncerning the sin of relapsing or falling away from a good & godly course of life, we are first for to consider, that he who doth truely repent, doth so bewaile his euils passed, that he doth fully purpose not to commit them againe: and that a vaine repentance is it (saith S. Austen) which the same fault following doth defile. The lamentations of former sinnes are not effectuall, if the same sinnes are iterated. Wilt thou be a true penitent? then cease from sin: take heed thou say not thou canst not abstaine from sin, God is faithfull, who will not suffer vs to be tempted aboue that we are able: our part therefore is, continually to resist temptations.

Secondly,

Secondly, we are to consider that the sum and complement of all vertue, doth consist in perseuerance.

Thirdly, let vs call to minde by whose instinct and motion we began this good worke, and that the end therof was to serue God.

Fourthly, who it is that would haue vs leaue off, to wit, the professed enemy of our soules.

Fiftly, that euill men doe often perseuer in euill, how much more should we perseuer in good?

Sixtly, that for want of perseuerance, an Angel lost heauen, Adam Paradise.

Seuenthly, or last of all, by perseuerance we come to blessednesse: for not he that runneth, but hee that endureth vnto the end, shall be saued.

A Prayer to obtaine perseuerance.

O Lord Iesus Christ, our most perseuerant Loue, thou which alwaies louest thine, vnto the end thou louest them, and hanging vpon the Crosse, didst say, It is finished, thereby giuing vs a most excellent example of perseuerance: make vs O Lord (in the seruice we haue vndertaken to serue thee) that wee may say with thine Apostle, We haue kept the Faith, and with holy Iob, We will not depart from innocencie whilst we liue: and with Dauid, Thou O Lord hast kept vs from our youth vp, forsake vs not in our age: but good Lord continue with vs to, and at the end of our liues, thorough Iesus Christ our onely Sauiour and Redeemer, Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXIX.

Vnto a fruitfull receiuing the holy Sacrament, three things are required.

1. Puritie of minde.
   1. That thou bee sorrie for sinnes past, and intend to abstaine from sinnes to come.
   2. That thou lay aside all hatred, for it is a Sacrament of loue.
   3. That thou remember who hath said it, Be ye holy as I am holy. Leuit. 11. 44.

2. A right intention that thou Communicate,
   1. Not of custome onely.
   2. Not to please men.
   3. Not to appeare outwardly holy.

3. Actuall

3. Actuall deuotion.
1. That thou pray to God without distraction.
2. That thou best Spiritually affected towardes Christ.
3. That thou come with all humilitie and deuout reuerence.

After Receiuing the holy Communion,
1. Giue thankes to Christ, that hee hath vouchsafed to come vnder thy roofe.
2. Be careful more and more to worship him.
3. Beseech him neuer to depart frō thee, that thou pray him to continue with thee euen vnto the end. So be it.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXX.

An admonition to the godly Reader, concerning the controuersie about the holy Eucharist, against sundry reasons of Cardinall Bellarmine.

1. WHereas euerie question in a case of Faith (a godly and deuout Reader) ought to stand forth at the Tribunall of holy Writ, and there to be iudged: Let it not seeme strange vnto any, if as once Paul appealed vnto Cæsar, so we by a course, allowable in law, doe (euermore due respect had vnto the authoritie of the ancient Fathers) in the first place, and that by good right, make our appeals in cases of controuersie vnto the holy Scriptures. For why? In these we not onely find the truth safe

safe and sound, notwithstanding all the deuices of euill men, endeuouring to corrupt the same yet euer the same, & so confirmed by the consent of the Church, but also the meanes of seeking out the same truth: which if we followe as the best guide, we cannot slip, erre, or be deceiued.

2. Now the meanes of seeking out the truth, may seeme by that of the prophet Ieremy, or by him, in whom the prophet spake, to be thus laid forth: aske, or enquire for the old way, it is the good way, walk in it, Ier. 6. 16. Our Lord & Sauiour, in the Gospell, in his reply to the Pharisees tempting him, Why did Moses giue them a Bill of diuorce? answereth: Moses did it for the hardnesse of your hearts, but from the beginning it was not so.

Whence it appeareth, that by the old way vnto the good way, by the first Institution vnto the best institution, all that are in doubt, all that erre, may more easily come for to attaine and

euict

enioy the same. When Almightie God promised vnto the people of Israel, by the fore-named Moses, a forme of framing the Tabernacle (and the appurtenances thereof,) Looke (saith he vnto him) that thou make it after the fashion that was shewed thee in the mountaine, Exo. 25. 40. The prophet Isaias, to withdraw the people from their diuiners & southsayers, cries out: To the Law and to the testimony, Isa. 8. 20. When Christ casteth out buyers and sellers out of the Temple, Luke 19. 45. he cuteth that of Ieremy. 7. 11. My house is the house of prayer, but you haue made it a den of theeues. The Apostle S. Paul in 1 Cor. 11. setting downe vnto them the true manner of celebrating the Lords supper, saith: for I haue receiued of the Lord, that which also I haue deliuered vnto you. If at any time the Fathers were in doubt concerning points appertaining to faith, by and by they repaired to the oracle of the scripture: so S. Ambrose Let the

Scrip-

Scripture be asked: so S. Austen: Let vs aske S. Peter and Saint Paul.

By this we see the meanes of seeking out the truth, which is, how that the Fathers look back to the Apostles, the Apostles to Christ, Christ to the Prophets, the Prophets to the Lawe, the Law to the first patterne vppon the mount.

3. Now of long time: yea, too-too long (O holy Christ) haue we Christians contended about thy holy Institution: from the Fathers to thy Apostles: yea (O blessed Sauiour) we come with all reuerence, and let vs come hand in hand, to consider the first patterne, instituted by thy selfe, Matt. 26. 26. Mar 14. 22. Luk. 22. 19.

And here first let the deuout Christian call to minde, that he that saide of the bread, This is my body, and of the wine, This is my blood, saide also of S. Iohn the Baptist, This is that Elias: and of himselfe, I am the doore, the true Vine,

Vine, &c. These, receiue my couenant in your flesh. By baptisme we are buried with him. Being many, we are one bread, one body: are vsuall phrases in the Scriptures.

4. Againe, what more meete then in a spirituall food to admit a spirituall sense? We did all eate of the same spirituall meate (sayth the Apostle) 1 Cor. 10. 3. Was it not giuen after supper, & in small quantitie? It is the Spirit, it is the Spirit that giueth life. I go forward, but by the way this pious consideration, gathered out of the words of Christ, concerning Christs owne institution, doth easily shew this to bee the nourishmēt of our soules, which is deliuered in the Lords supper and doth withall manifest the great excellencie thereof.

From the words of Christ, I come vnto the Apostle S. Paul, a good Interpreter of the same words, one who wanted not care of stirring vp the Corinthians to reuerence & deuotion, about this

Mysterie,

Mysterie. Now what saith the Apostle? He commands no adoration: he speakes not a word of transubstantiation, but onely sheweth the dignity thereof in shewing both the Author and end.

¶ Let vs proceed to the Orthodoxall Fathers, that it may appeare (reuerent Sir) that we neither vpon a desire of contradiction, nor vpon hatred to any, doe imbrace an opinion newly broched: but looke what we thinke, beleeue, and confesse in this main point of Christian doctrine, the same also the auncient Church hath thought, beleeued, and with one consent taught: & herein we take no little cõfort, that although our faith doth principally rest on the word of God, rightly vnderstood: yet, it cãnot chuse but yeeld vs ioy, that with the Orthodoxal fathers holding rightly, we hold also that which is right. We acknowledg that of Dio. Arcopagite (neither doe I see why we should fear in this case, either the author or the authority) in that in his diuine

uine Hierarchy, he calleth the Eucharist a most diuine sacrament. That of Iustine Martir, where he saith, we receiue not those as cõmon bread, nor common drinke. That of Tertullian against the Marcionites. The bread which he tooke and distributed, Christ made his bodie. That of Origen vpõ diuers places of the gospell, When thou eatest and drinkest the body and bloud of the Lord, the Lord entreth vnder thy roof. That of S. Cyprian, As in the person of Christ, the humanitie appeared, but the diuinitie was hid: so in the visible Sacrament a diuine essence communicates it selfe vnto vs. That of Hillarie, speaking of the Trinitie, Of the veritie of the bodie and bloud of Christ, there is left no place of doubt. That of S. Ambrose, De mysteriis initiandis, we haue more excellent foode in the Eucharist then the Iewes had in Manna. That of S. Ierom in his Epistle to Hedebia, Here the Lord Iesus (meaning in the Sacrament) is both

both the maker of the feast, & the food. Last of all, in stead of many that of S. Austen, O with what puritie of minde, with what chastitie of bodie, is that sacrifice to be celebrated, where thou (O Lord) art both the Priest, and the Sacrifice?

7 But to breake off the mentioning of the fathers, lest in multiplying their names wee might seeme ambitious: we heare them all (as it is meete) speaking with great reuerence of so great a mysterie: but for disputing or reasoning about transubstantiation, we heare not a word. Let their writings be read ouer, and read ouer again: they admit a change, but what a one? of the substance? nothing lesse: for it remaines the same. Of the vse? It is right: for sure in the Lords supper it is diuine.

8 Whereas oftentimes in the Fathers wee meete with these words, Nature, Substance, applying them to the efficacy of the sacraments, we are to vnderstand, that

that by these words they intended, first, to draw the people from the outward signes to the substance: & next, to kindle in their affections, both reuerence and loue.

9 Antiquity therefore is silent in the plea or defence of transubstantiation. Sure, yea most sure it is, that the figuratiue speeches of the ancient fathers do no way patronize this paradox: the sobrietie of the same Fathers let vs their posteritie praise, & imitate.

10 And now that we may ingeniously confesse that which is a plaine case in the sight of God, & not flourish ouer the truth with colours of Rhetorick, or smoother it with the clouds of deceit. We acknowledge that the dignitie of this Sacrament is greater then words can expresse: yea then the mind of man is able to cõceiue: if any wil exact the efficacy of these fiue words, For this is my body, we answer, it is a great mystery.

11 Truely we giue, and that iustly, great respect and reuerence

rence to the holy Eucharist: for whereas Bread and Wine are elements naturally ordained for the sustentation of the bodie: by the power of diuine benediction, they do receiue a vertue, that being receiued of the faithfull, they become nourishmēts of the soule: nay, they become meanes whereby we are sanctified both in bodie and soule, & are made the members of Christ.

12. But Christ (some say) in expresse words calleth the bread his bodie, & the wine his blood. True, in expresse words also he calleth himselfe a Rocke. Right well sayth Eusebius Emisenus, commest thou to the sacrament? Consider there, the bodie and bloud of Christ, wonder at it with reuerence, touch it with thy minde, receiue it with the hand of thy heart. Doe not say as the Capernaites, Maister, how commest thou hither? But with the Disciples asking no question, be glad thou doest enioy him. Yet is honoured in this Mysterie, that

that was once offered vpon the Crosse.

Yea, but how can this bee, that Christ sitting at the right hand of God in heauen, should dispose of his bodie to vs, poore inhabitants in earth? Take here the answere of the Angel Gabriel: the holy Ghost hath ouer-shadowed it. From hence (saith S. Bernard) to search is temeritie, to know is life eternall.

13. Is it not a hard saying, Vnlesse ye eate the flesh of the Son of God, &c? It is an hard saying to them that are hard of beleeuing. The Disciples hearing that of their Lord and Master: Take, eate, this is my body, They take, they eat, asking no question. Being confirmed in faith (saith S. Chrysostome) they take and eate: vnbeleeuers hearing the same of our Sauiour, they depart, they taste not. Peter answereth, Lord thou hast the words of life: others goe backward, leauing the Lord of life. The Capernaite hearing, dreamed of eating naturally, grossely:

grossely: the godly are assured of eating spiritually, and yet withall really.

14 Great was the authoritie of Pythagoras amongst his scholers, if he said it, they were silent: but greater was, and is, & ought to bee the authoritie of Christ with beleeuers, hee saith it, and they beleeue. The sun remaines a splendent body, though Bats and Owles cannot endure it: the holy sacrament remaines an vnspeakeable mysterie, though the carnall man doth not perceiue it. In this case silence is the safest eloquence, and the best expressing is not to expresse: a godly meditation is safer then a Socratical disputing, discourse of controuersie doth often abate deuotion: discourse of piety about this mystery, is sweeter then the honie or the hony combe.

15 The Passe-ouer which Christ kept with his Disciples, it was prepared in an vpper roome. When men brought vnto him a man sicke of the Palsey, they

they vncouered the roofe of the house. The harder partes of the Paschall Lambe were consumed by fire: Mysteries are, if not contrarie, yet often aboue reason. Well saith S. Cyrill in his third booke against Iulian, if humane reason wauer in things sensible, how much shall it do so in things beyond sense? Faithlesse Iulian, what if the creation of the angels exceedes humane capacitie, did not Moses well in forbearing to mention it? assuredly, hee did well. What if it cannot by reason be conceiued how Christ sitting at the table, should giue himselfe to his? wilt thou therefore by & by imagine this or that change? Let vs rather honor Christ in his mysteries, praise him for his mercies, bee thankfull vnto him for his benefits. Those things which we comprehend, let vs admire, those which wee cannot comprehend let vs more admire. Though words bee wanting, what to expresse, let not faith be wanting what to beleeue.

16 When all is done the Deuout estimation of the auncient Fathers, concerning this holy sacrament is not lightly or loosly to be passed ouer, whose example for piety let vs set before the eies of our minde.

17 Notwithstanding, we looke not so much in this case, what the Fathers (who were no babes) for the first fiue hundred years haue determined, as what Christ saieth, who is before all. But be it, let antiquity preuaile. Which way soeuer men turne them: for these curious & needles disputes: sure they were not from the beginning.

18 And now a little to take a surueigh of the beginning, and progresse of the doctrine of transubstantiation, when newe the enuious man watched to sowe his tares amongest the Wheate, which is of graines the cheefest: to corrupt Golde, which is of mettals the purest: to drawe away the mindes of men from the pledges of their saluation, amongst

mongst which, the holy Sacrament is not the least: this hee did not so much by opposition, as by subtile guile, stirring vp curious fancies to seeke and search out reasons of the secret counsell of God, and to say with them in the Gospell, Master, how camest thou hither?

19 One Berengarius in the yere one thousand and eight & twenty was the first that came vpon the stage to act this tragedy: by him were kindled such sparks as after brake out into great and fearfull flames. The matter is tossed to and fro in the time of Nicholas the second Bishop of Rome. In the yeare 1040. Berengarius abiured his former assertions: were his latter thoughtes the wiser? this I stand not to discusse, dispute he that will.

20 The Church in the mean while, who ought to haue followed the counsell of S. Paul to Timothy, in suppressing Questions that cause strife did cleane contrary, in adding more and more

daily a multitude of questions so long, that those sparkes kindled by Berengarius began to increase, and set all as it were into a most hideous combustion.

21 An assembly of religious men came together in the Councill of Laterans in this ruefull estate of things, what is done by the Councill? doth it appease debates? No. Doeth it call backe this holy Institution of Christ to the ancient practise? It endeuoured nothing lesse: only it promulgates a new and vnheard of doctrine of Transubstantiation: and why might not the Councill establish the word Transubstantiation, as wel as the first Councill of Nice did the word, ὁμοούσιος. The first Councill of Ephesus, the words, θεοτοκος: which both were established by Councils, & after receiued of the Christian world? There was neither the same authoritie to decree, nor the necessity of doctrine to be decreed in this, as was in the two before named Councills: what did not

not time decay?

22 After this, the Question comes to be handled by the maister of the Sentences, whom the Schools Diuines do follow: Is the controuersie appeased? Disputed it is too and fro by manie subtilties. Here the multitude of questions is able to confound the Reader, & the diuers turnings and windings able to bring the happiest wit into a Labyrinth. At one time the doubt is about the power of God: at another, about his will. Now, of the existing of a substance with accidents: then, of accidents without a substance. Sometime, of annihilating of former natures: sometimes, of transelementing the same. In this Chaos there is nothing founde certaine, saue that vncertaine dreame of transubstantiation.

23 Whether or no this were pleasing to that blessed Spirite, who willeth vs to bee wise vnto sobriety, let all men iudge.

24 The Bethsamites of whom

we reade in 1 Kings 6. were happy in enioying the presence of the Arke of God, but falling to bee curious, by prying into it, they suffered iust punishment for their curiosity. The Church of Rome was happy while it enioyed the presence of this holy mistery (had it knowne her owne happinesse) when for a thousand yeres together, there was neuer heard of the name of Vbiquitarie, Sacramentarie, or the like: no diuision of the East against the West church, or of the west against the east: all agreed about the truth of this holy mysterie: but whē once men would presse into depths inaccessible, rend away the vaile, & intrude themselues into the holy of holies: good Lord, with what a spirit of giddinesse were they whirled too & fro, as he of whom the Comicall poet maketh mention, which way to betake him he knew not? This it is to run into needlesse mazes.

25 To get credit to this Newfound doctrine before mentioned myracles

myracles are reported: but what ones I pray you? Not those of Sa. Cyprian, or Nazianzene, or Optatus Meleuitanus: or euen of Surius himselfe, which were to set forth the dignity of this Sacrament: this had bene tollerable, & not mentioned of the Fathers without cause: but myracles (I say) are reported (or rather indeed fained) to confirme men, yea to seduce mē, were they credulous by this meanes in this Doctrine of trāsubstantiation, which was no way allowable, for G O D stands not in need of this.

26 To conclude the whole proceedings, and tumultuous differences raised cōcerning the question of the holy Eucharist: in briefe, let this suffice: men obseruing no meane about the meane & manner of Christs presence in the Sacrament, that they haue done much hurt by their boldnes and curiositie, it appeares more clearely then the noone light.

27 In this meane space, all things now tossed and turmoiled

there arise vpon the cleane contrarie part a kinde of men prone and apt, not so much to the alteration, as indeed to the vtter ruinating of thinges: into which kinde of men, it were to bee wished, that the Common-wealth: yea, the church of Christ had neuer fallen: When that haue not a iot thing of true religion, but only a bare outward shew: men that are wont to account it great pietie to censure others to bee impious: these are those that vnder a pretence of auoiding superstition will obserue in a manner, no pious duties of true Religion: and especially in celebrating the Lords supper after a rude and vnmannerly manner, they neglect all deuotion: is the communion obserued? well, a badge of our profession it is, a familiar assurably of guests, a remembrance of somewhat passed: Take yee, eate yee, sit yee, stand yee: there is no other gesture required, then what is vsed at publike meetings: what neede any mention

of

of the body of Christ which was broken and giuen for vs, of the bloud of Christ that was shed for vs? Take yee, eate ye, drinke yee. O blessed Paul, if thou didst liue, thou wouldst tell these men, they ought vpon feare of iudgement to discerne the LORDS body.

28 Was there a punishment inflicted vpon him that wold make the Law of Moses of none effect, and shall he gee without punishment that would make this Diuine institution of the Sonne of God of none effect? The irreligious opinions of these Men, with whom nothing is true but in opinion, whom nothing can please but their owne fantasies: with whom nothing is sounde but in shew: the assertions, yea the words of these mens assertions, our Aduersaries of the Church of Rome doe often but vniustly, terme our Axiomes, or principall points of our religion, whatsoeuer any bold spirited man, whatsoeuer any vnlearned,

whatsoeuer any lesse godly, shall breath out, either against the Faith, or good manners, appertaining to the holy Sacrament, we straight are censured & condemned of impietie, of heresie, without iustice, without charity.

29 Wherefore, they are in this case to be requested, that at last they would see and consider our reuerent respect had towards this holy Mistery, agreeable to antiquity: we doe confesse with all good conscience, that the worthinesse of this Sacrament, is greater then either the force of any mans wit, or copiousnesse of his eloquence, is able to expresse, or conceiue.

30 And here we cãnot but maruell, and desire to maruell, that Cardinall Bellarmine, doeth so lightly passe ouer the words of Caluin mentioned of him, as it were by chance: I am not ashamed (saith the same Caluin) to acknowledge mine ignorance in this Mistery.

31 Wel saith Fulgentius against the

the Arians, true faith hath neuer superfluous, but it euer had and hath iust reasons. So also S. Cyrill, Mysteries are offered to beleeuers, not to questioners.

32 Albeit then the maner be not of vs euer curiously inquired, or searched, yet the same presence of Christ is acknowledged, which Christ himselfe would haue acknowledged: we say with S. Ambrose, that there is not taken frō bread the substance thereof, but that there is adioined the grace of Christs body, after a manner ineffable.

33 It was no other but a shadow of this benefit, that was of old giuen to the Iews in the ark of the Couenant, and yet Salomon did so admire it, as that hee saide, And is it credible that God should dwell with men? 1 Kings, 8,27.

34 We often maruell, and condemne the Iewes, that hauing Christ amongst them, they did not acknowledge and receiue him: let vs cōsider Christ among vs,

vs, and inuert that saying of the Husbandmen. This is the heire, let vs take him, receiue him, beleeue in him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

35 Last of all, concerning the controuersie about the holy Eucharist, betweene two extreames wherof we haue heard, let vs imbrace the meane, let vs with a sincere Faith apprehend the truth: apprehending, let vs keepe it: keeping, let vs adorne it with godly manners.

36 And now to draw in, as it were, the sailes of Admonition, (godly Reader) seeing that this Diuine Institution was left by our gracious Redeemer, both for the inward peace of the soul, and the outward of the Church: who can sufficiently lament to see the dissention, that hath miserable diuided the christian worlde, and discord that hath risen about the same? Let vs call to minde, that God is not the God of dissention but the God of peace. Let vs all forbeare on both sides, needlesse and

and vnprofitable disputes. Vnlesse thou Lord hadst said it: This is my body, this is my bloud: who would haue beleeued? Vnlesse thou hadst saide, O holy Christ, Take, eate, Drinke yee all of this, who durst haue touched it? who would haue approached to so heauenly a repast, hadst thou not commanded? but thou commanding, who would not ioyfully come and communicate?

37 Let vs then hold captiue humane reason and prepare our selues vnto the fruite of this Heauenly Manna Vnnecessarie Disputes bring small profit, we may with greater benefit wonder, then argue. Then are the workes of God most truly conceiued, when they are deuoutly admired.

The

The Peroration, or summing vp by prayer, the Admonition about the Controuersie.

1 GOD, of his mercie, grant, that this excellent league of loue and charity, left by the Sauiour of the world to his church, and commended vnto vs by the loue of him who loued vs, and gaue himselfe for vs: God grant (I say) that all contentions laid asleepe, we may on all parts accord about this league of loue, & let men and Angels say, Amen.

2 Great differences, acute disputes haue long since beene had, in the meane space (mercifull Lord) what barrennesse of pietie is there found? Many are become weary with striuing: some, euen with looking on, and beholding them that striue: a third sort, in hearing and reading distractions on diuers parts: most (which is to be lamented) are slow and frozen in pietie.

3 The

3 The Question about the Sacrament, hath now manie yeeres beene controuersed in the Church. The Authors of Sects and heresies, as the Anabaptists and Arrians, and such like they are neither orthodoxall, nor of one house with vs, but this strife is Domesticall, which GOD cease.

4 Now whereas wee see no end of cõtending, and small hope in regard of men, of euer seeing an end, let vs all iointly beseech our heauenly Father, that in seeking peace we may go one before another, that all beeing carefull to attaine Christian vnitie, and carefull of our owne saluation, wee may glorifie our Father in heauen.

5 Let the last necessitie find vs readie, which will surprise them that are vnready: let our vncertain end strike into vs a certaine foresight of our end, which according to the Wiseman, wee should remember, and let enmitie passe. Future blessednes,

sednesse, attained it may be: for the excellencie thereof, rightly conceiued it cannot be. In seeking so great a good, the best meane is, to obserue no meane.

6 To drawe to an end, although in regard of the continuance of the before-named blessednesse, there be no end. Let vs euery one dispose to himselfe that day which doth assigne euery one to his eternal mansion, where there shall bee no more night, where there shall neede no light of the candle, nay of the Sunne: where the Lambe is the lampe, in that blessed vision of the Lord Iesus, vnto which let vs according to the counsell of the holy Ghost, proceede by one rule. Phil. 4, 15, 16.

Glory to God in the Highest, on earth peace, and towardes men good will.

Godly

Godly Meditations vpon the Passion of our Lord & Sauiour IESVS CHRIST: necessarie to be vsed before and after the holy Communion.

CHAP. LXXI.

AS there is nothing that more appertaineth vnto our saluation, then the Passion of Christ our redeemer: neither is there any benefite, for which wee ought more to giue thankes: so there is nothing wherof wee are

are in our best and best disposed dispositions, more to speak of, to conferre of, to remember, to meditate of.

Againe, we ought more to giue thankes to God for our redemption, then for our creation, for these causes. The first is, if man be obliged or bound to God, for that of nothing, by his very word he was created: now by sinne to be made lesse then nothing, and thē to be remade, is much more. The second is, for that God shewed more loue by Redeeming man, then by creating him: for before he was created, man did nothing whereby he deserued to be created: but after he was created, he sinned and deserued that his first being should be destroyed: wherefore farre greater was the benignity and mercy of God in redeeming man, then in creating him.

3 The third is, for that the benefit of Creation had not profited man, without the benefite of his redemption.

4 The

4 The fourth is, for that in the creation God gaue man himselfe, but in the redemption God gaue himselfe for man.

5 The fift is, for that it was a great thing that we were his worke, but a greater is it, in that we are his price.

Wherfore the deuout Christian ought often by contemplation to looke vp to Christ crucified (especially hauing a remorse of his sins) as the people did in the wilderness looke vp to the Serpent that was lifted vp, when they were stung of serpents.

The

The fruites of this Meditation.

THe first is, to receiue curing and comfort: In all my afflictions (saith S. Austen) I finde not any more effectuall remedy, then the wounds of Christ, in which I securely sleepe. May, this Meditation doeth make afflictions sweet (saith S. Gregorie) as the wood did that sweetened the bitter waters.

The second is, it incites to all Vertues, and is a remedie against all Vices: it incites to Humility, Patience, Prayer, and such like: it auerts the minde from all vices, Quando occurrit turpis cogitatio, fugio ad vulnera Christi (saith S. Bernard) May, quando Dæmon insidiatur, fugio ad vulnera Christi, & fugit a me. When any euill thought

thought assaults me, I flie to the wounds of Christ: when Satan doeth assault, I flye to these wounds, and he flies from mee.

The third is, it stirreth men vp to prayse God, as the people did when they were deliuered in the redde Sea: if wee haue any thankfulnesse, this should moue thankfulnesse.

A Colloquie of the Soule with Christ, touching the Passion.

Soule.

LOrd, wherefore diddest thou suffer thy selfe to be sold?

Christ. That I might deliuer thee from seruitude.

Lord, why diddest thou pray so much?

That I might appease Gods wrath against thee.

Lord, why didst thou suffer feare and trembling?

That I might make thee secure, and of a good courage.

Lord, why were deceits intended against thee.

To deliuer thee from deceits.

Wherefore didst thou sweat bloud?

To wash away the spots of thy sinne.

Why

Why wouldest thou be taken?
That thou mightst not be taken of thine enemies.
Why wouldest thou be bound?
To loose the bands of thy sins
Why wert thou denied of Peter?
To confesse thee before my Father.
Why wouldst thou be forsaken of the Disciples?
That I might bee with thee until the day of iudgement.
Why wouldst thou bee accused?
To absolue thee.
Why wouldst thou bee spitted on?
To wipe away thy foulnes.
Why wouldst thou be whipped?
That thou mightst bee freed from stripes.
VVhy wouldst thou be lifted vp vpon the crosse?
That thou mightest be lifted vp to heauen.
VVhy wouldst thou be crowned with Thornes?
To Crowne thee with glorie.

VVhy

Why were thy armes ſtretched out?

To imbrace thee, O Soule.

Why was thy ſide opened?

To receiue thee in.

Why didſt thou die amidſt two theeues?

That thou mightſt bee in the midſt of Angels.

Of

CHAP. LXXII.

Of the manner in particular how to meditate of the Passion.

Let the deuout Christian call to minde, how Christ our blessed Sauiour suffered in euerie part of his body, how his head was crowned with thornes, his eies couered with teares, his face full of spettings, his mouth full of gall, his eares full of contumelies, his shoulders full of lashes: how he had his hands pierced, his side opened, his feete fastned vnto the Crosse, his whole body strained and stretched out.

After this, let him meditate of his Agonie in the Garden: for the Sinnes of the Garden: of his sweate in a colde night, when his Prayers went vp, and the droppes of bloud ran downe: of his hanging vppon the crosse, when he seemed as it were forsaken of his friends in earth, and his father in heauen: of the bending downe his head, & giuing vp the Ghost with these words: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

Here let the deuout Christian stand amazed, at the height and depth, the length and bredth of the loue of Christ.

Last of all, let him consider what good effects this meditation ought to worke in him, to wit, of humility, patience, loue, dutie, reuerence, and thankfulnesse to his redeemer. Who would not be humble calling to minde that the Sonne of God humbled himselfe vnto the death of the crosse? Who would not be patient, con-

sidering

sidering his patience, who as a meeke Lambe opened not his mouth before the shearer? Who would not loue him, who laide downe his life for vs miserable sinners?

Certaine briefe petitions, to follow the former Meditations.

SOnne of God, Redeemer of the world:
Haue mercy vpon vs.
By thy tender loue to man,
Haue mercy vpon vs.
By the institution of thy supper before thy suffering.
Haue mercy vpon vs.
By thine agonie in the garden,
Haue mercy vpon vs.
By thy hard beating, & scourging
Haue mercy vpon vs.
By thy crowning with thornes,
Haue mercy vpon vs.
By the bearing of thy crosse when thou wentest to death,
Haue mercy vpon vs.
By the piercing of thy hands and feete,

Haue

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By the lifting vp of thy most holy body vpon the crosse,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By the loue that thou haddest, hanging three houres on the crosse aliue,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By thy holy teares shed vppon the Crosse,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By thy thirst, and receiuing gall,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By enclining thy head vpon the Crosse,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By thy giuing vp the ghost,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By all the labour wearines, sorrow, and heauinesse, that thou sufferedst from the day of thy natiuitie, vnto the heure of the departure of thy soule from thy body,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By thy glorious and vertuous resurrection,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By thy marueilous ascention vp into heauen,

Haue mercy vpon vs.

By thy diuine consolation, and sending downe of the holy Ghost vpon thine Apostles, comfort vs euermore by the same holy ghost. and, Haue mercy vpon vs.

CHAP.

Godly Meditations vpon the Diuine presence to stirre vs vp to a continuall care of walking in the wayes of God, after our receiuing the LORDS Supper.

CHAP. LXXIII.

How excellent and behouefull an exercise it is, to place, GOD, as present in all our actions.

VErie many excellent, as also profitable meanes, & exercises doe abound for the obtaining of vertue: amongst which notwithstanding

in my iudgement, none is more behoouefull or commodious, then this we are now about to handle, of the diuine presence, if (as it ought) it be rightly applied: for whatsoeuer good resteth in all the other, in some sorte is comprized in this. In a spirituall life, what profite is reaped by other meanes, the same in this exercise may bee obtained. This one onely doeth moue, and encourage the seruant of God to be truly carefull, it doth kindle in him a desire to vse al other good practises, that the holsome aides, and necessary helpes for the purchasing of true and sound vertues, may be at hand: that the heauenly knowledge for the enlightning of our vnderstanding, and spirituall strength for the putting forth of our will, may bee daily granted of God. And thus that is verified which we said, namely, this exercise to be as it were the summe and recapitulation of all other. If therefore, the seruant of God, being

ing desirous of spirituall proceeding, doth feare to be forgetfull of so many healthfull waies, which hee hath either heard of Religious men, or read in Bookes, to be necessarie for the attaining to the perfection of a spirituall life, let him at least be mindfull of this, and exercise it in this matter: for with this care he shall bring to passe, that all other which did seeme to be vtterly forgotten, shall (when need requires) be freshly recalled to minde. Againe, if any one being desirous earnestly to please God, and in all things to obey his heauenly will, (after reading in godly bookes, so many experiments and admonitions, the meanes to leade a godly and deuout life) be suppressed in mind thinking it, as it were, impossible to make vse of all these exercises, let him be of good courage, for behold with one preseruatiue all difficulty is taken away. To this one exercise by Gods assistance, hee may seriously apply

himselfe, and he may discerne his heart so to bee kindled with an heauenly desire, and with the will of God so framed and conformd, that all other meanes and remedies shall by diuine inspiration, presently come into his mind, as occasion shall serue, both for the embracing and exercising of any whatsoeuer vertues, and also for the banishing and vanquishing temptations, howsoeuer greeuous. For truly God whom he doth behold present with him, & in whom he doth heartily repose all his trust and confidence: and of whom he doth earnestly desire succour, euen he in his good time and place, doeth minister in due season, whatsoeuer is necessarie in that exercise, and doth deliuer vnto him both knowledge and strength for to vse all meanes requisite to this purpose: for God doth neuer leaue them destitute of the seasonable aid of his grace who do (as is meete) leade their liues in the sight and presence of his diuine Maiesty.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXXIIII.

How greatly this exercise is commended in the Scriptures, and how speciall a care the seruant of God ought to place therein, being desirous of proceeding in wel-doing.

OF that which hath beene spoken, the seruant of GOD may easily conclude, that euen as there is neede of care and diligence in all exercises and godly meanes, for profitable vertues to be obtained, so a farre greater and more feruent study is required in this practise: namely, of the presence of God apprehended by the eies of the vnderstanding, or to bee placed before the Eyes of the minde: because this amongest the residue, hath the

the preheminence, as one hath wisely obserued, who sayeth, amongst all holy exercises, let this be thy chiefest care, and therein straine or stretch out al the faculties of thy soule, that continently, which is to say often, thou maist lift vp thy heart to God, & to the meditation and loue of heauenly things. Wilt thou attaine to purity of soule? alwaies lift vp thy heart to God: this only is the cause that so fewe come to perfection, because they spend their time in exercises & meanes lesse profitable, and neglect the chiefest. And he addeth: Labour to vnite thy soule with God, and to haue him fixed in thy memory: aduance thy desires, & the whole affections of thy heart vnto him: and although an hundred times in one houre thou beest distracted in minde, bee not therefore dismayd, but alwaies haue recourse to thy purpose. Let the words of the holy and reuerend Fathers moue thee to frequent this exercise, who haue exhorted vs to the practise

practise heereof with a generall consent, as beeing instructed of one Maister, namely, the holy Ghost.

But this doctrine the holy Fathers haue deriued out of the fountaines of the Scripture, wherein often, and with grauity of words this exercise is commended: & that we may the more truly vnderstand the necessitie and excellency hereof, and that it may the more deeply be imprested in our harts, with diuers forms and manners of speech (wherein notwithstanding is but one and the selfe-same meaning) the holy Ghost doth enflame and stir vs vp to that exercise, according as Dauid saith, Seeke ye the Lord, & ye shalbe confirmed: seeke yee alwayes his face. By his face (saith S Augustine) there is meant his presence. And therefore alwaies to seeke the face of the Lorde, is to be busied as in his presence: & to turne the desires, and loue of our hearts to him. And in another place he saith: My eyes are alwaies

waies to the Lord: the eyes of the soule are the vnderstanding and memory, which daily meditating and embracing God, doe draw the affection of the heart with them. And from hence hee doeth gather, that God doeth deliuer such a one from the baites of the diuell, that is, he doth minister strength to him, whereby he shall the lesse yeeld or faint with temptations: for presently he addeth: And he shall pull my feet out of the snare. And this is that which the holy Ghost doth by the Wiseman require of all: In al thy waies think of God, and he will direct thy goings: in thy wayes, that is, in all thy actions, both inwarde and outwarde: thy footsteps, that is he will direct all the affections and desires of thy soule, and all the exercises of thy body to his glory, by enlightening and mouing thee, that in all things thou shalt frame thy will according to his heauenly will.

This also is a most worthy exercise (Saint Bernard beeing witnesse

witnesse which Saint Paul hath commended to his Disciple, Timothy, saying: Exercise thy selfe in godlines, for bodily exercise is but little profitable, but godlines is expedient for all things: For hee would haue this godlinesse to be a continual mindfulnes of God, and a daily Direction of our Soules to the vnderstanding of his will, and to loue and embrace him.

The Apostle here (as many holy men do affirme) cals the exercise of the body, mortifications, and outward repentance, with which the body is punished for the reconciling vs to God. For although these actions are excellent and healthfull, yet notwithstãding if they be compared with the exercise of the diuine presence to be placed before our eyes, it may be said that the fruit of them is but small, and though they are profitable to some men, yet they are not so to all, for they are also to some, sometimes hurtfull. They may bee conuenient

conuenient if they tende at a wholesome end, but if it be otherwise, they doe rather hinder. And therefore we determine sometimes to moderate them, sometimes not to vse them at all. But this heauenly exercise is most profitable to all men of what state soeuer, both because it is spirituall, and inwarding in the soule, and also because herein is true godlinesse.

Here is Gods worship exercised, which doth chiefly consist in the inward deeds of faith, hope, and charity: for what is it else to behold God as present, but to lift vp our hart to him, to beleeue in him, to loue him, and to sigh after him with mourning? This holy exercise (I say) the Scriptures doe often repeate in those places wherin they do commend it: that is, that wee may pray without ceasing, Eccl. 18. Lu. 21. and that we may watch in our prayers, 2 Thes. 1. For truly our thoughts and desires, are voices and words with which our soule doth

doth speake: and therefore, so often as we, meditating of God as being present, do direct, or lift vp our cogitations and petitions to him, it may bee truely saide, that we do pray: and if we do it very often, or most often, it may bee most often, it may be most rightly said, that we pray alwaies, and without ceasing. For although in the holy scripture the vocall praier is also commended to vs, euen as truely it is commanded principally vnto the Ministers of the Church notwithstanding, in the places aboue mentioned, the praier of the minde, which is only in the heart, is also praised. The vocall praier hath times and certaine houres limited of the Church, in which space of time, the fore-said prayer is vsed: but the prayer of the minde hath not so, it doth comprehend all time and place: for at all times, and in all places, we may haue God present, and we may direct our praiers & petitions to him. For what a man doth often, and

as

as it were ordinarily, in the vsuall manner of speech, hee is said to doe it alwaies. And in this sence, the holy and expert men haue satisfied that aduice or precept of praying continually.

Neither doth this attention to God, hinder the functions of outward workes in the seruants of God: yea, it doth greatly further them, that they may be done diligently and perfectly, according to an earnest desire & zeale which God doth participate to men of this sort, who are busied as in his sight. Yea, for his great mercies sake he doth impart to some so admirable and notable giftes of his grace, that not only without labour and difficulty, but also, with exceeding great pleasure and facility, they may haue their heart affectuously conioyned, and vnited to God.

Wherefore with a great and chearefull mind, euery one ought to apply himselfe vnto this holy exercise, and he shal easily vnderstand how ready GOD is, to

stay

stay as present with vs: as often as it shall please him to behold vs, let vs speake to him, and familiarly talke with him. From whence doth proceede such aides and helpes, that what doeth seeme hard to the strength of nature: yea, impossible, it may bee made most easie and pleasant to any one.

That one may haue accesse to an earthly King, and that hee may speake and intreate with him, is very hard, neither may it be obtained, but by the fauour and grace of many: yea, there is neede of the labour and seruice of many yeares, before they can come to familiar acquaintance with the King: but God, although he is endued with infinite Maiestie and glorie, hee is alwaies prepared in euery houre and moment to admit vs into his sight, that wee may lift vp the eyes of our mindes to him, to behold his beautifulnes, and greatnesse, to desire his glory, to loue his goodnes, taste his sweetnes, in being

busied familiarly with him, and in requiring some grace of him. Neither onely is hee prepared to doe this, but hee doeth also wish and inuite vs with most great rewardes propounded of his fauour and glorie, that wee may doe so. Neither doeth hee bid some onely, and those which excell in holinesse, as there haue beene many ancient holy men, who haue giuen themselues wholy, day and night, to diuine Seruice, but also all the faithful as many as with a pure heart, doe seeke the honour of God, and to serue him.

O how deuoutly and religiously doe they performe their duty, who doe desire, and carefully seeke such a good, who doe not neglect such an honourable exercise, wherby they may haue God alwaies present, and continually enioy his company? They may truely feare, whosoeuer refuse in this life, to vse this so heauenly a benefit, that in the houre of death the gate will be shut, as to the

the vngrateful, and to them that neglect the cleare light and contemplation of God as being present, which then shalbe open only to iust and blessed men.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXXV.

Of the exceeding great fruits of this diuine exercise: and first of all, of the fruit of pureneſſe of minde.

NOw to the intent that wee may bee stirred vp to frequent this holy exercise with more earnestnesse, let vs consider what effects it worketh in the minde, and that it may take the deeper impression, let vs set before vs some examples. Amongst vertues and the gifts of God, which are had in price with men of God, Pureneſſe of heart doth challenge the first place, as that which doth yeeld habitation or dwelling to the diuine Maiesty: hence it is vulgarly said, Prou. 22. Hee that loueth pureneſſe of heart, the King shall

shalbe his friend: that is, God, the King of heauen and earth. This Purenes we shal attaine and preserue, if wee behold GOD euer present with the Eye of our minde: if it bee otherwise, and if man forget GOD, neglect to consider that hee is seene of him, that hee is before him, that hee doth liue, and doe all things before him: the next thing is, that hauing the reines loosed, hee by and by fals into sinne, and continueth therein, according to that of the Psalme: God is not in his sight, therefore his waies are become wicked.

For, as the very thought, so the inordinate desire of earthly things, doth defile the Soule by sinne, and doth put God out of the same: so in this exercise, because man doeth place his cogitations on GOD, and after cogitations godly affections doe succeede, it comes to passe, that the minde by little and little, is taken away from the loue of earthly and transitorie thinges, and

and by this meanes is purged and renued. Saint Bernard found this by experience in himselfe, as he humbly confesseth out of Diuine inspiration, for the edifying of others, saying: You aske, whereas the waies of GOD are hard to be found out, how I come to know them? It is quicke and liuely, as soone as the diuine presence comes into my minde, it awakens my sleepy Soule, it stirreth vp, it moues, it softens, it wounds my heart, which is hard, stony, and ill affected: it beginneth also to pul vp destroy, build plant, water that which was dry, enlighten that which was darke, open that which was shut, enflame that which was cold, and also to righten that which was wrong, to make plaine that which was rough: so that my Soule doeth now blesse God, & all that is within me, doth giue praise vnto his holy name. All this saith S. Bernard, whereby he doth testifie what wonderfull things GOD wrought in him when hee had him present in his minde.

Neither

Neither doth the diuine presence effect this only in the seruants of God, but also it brings to passe in great sinners, that their harts be purged from the cõtagion of sin. For being heereby admonished, they do lift vp their heads from the bed of sinne, and being moreouer assisted with diuine light, they doe consider themselues to be in the sight of GOD, who is Iudge both of quicke and dead, who being present, doth see as often as they offend: heerevpon being stricken with shame & horror, they dare not any more commit wickednesse, but wonder at their former blindnesse, that so rashly and boldly, as if no God or Iudge had seene them, they ran head long into all euill.

It is storied of that infamous Harlot, Thais, to whom when Paphnutius a holy man came into a secret & solitary place, that she said vnto him, Heere can I not be seene but of God only, or of the Diuel. To whom Paphnutius answered, Go too then, if GOD see thee with most pure eies, with what

fore-head dareſt thou ſinne in his ſight? Forthwith, ſaith the ſtory, the beame of heauenly light cleered her minde: whereupon ſhee beganne with great ſhame, yea, with capitall hatred, to deteſt her former wicked life: inſomuch that in the midſt of the Citty of Alexandria, ſhe burnt all thoſe things which ſhe had gathered together by her ſinfull trade and vicious courſe of life, and betooke her ſelfe vnto a ſtraite and penitent manner of liuing, ſequeſtring her ſelfe from the world for the ſpace of three yeares, vntill ſhe dyed.

The ſame hapned to another by the meanes of holy Ephrem, who comming to a ſinfull woman, aſked her, if ſhe durſt commit her wonted ſins in the midſt of the City Edeſſa? who anſwered, I dare not: for ſhame doeth forbid me to commit theſe thinges in the ſight of men. To whom Ephrem ſaid: Know this, that though thou committeſt euill in the moſt ſecret place, and remote from the eyes of men, yet thou art ſeene of God,

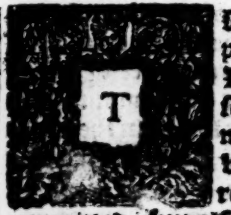
God, who is euery where present: if therefore shame doe deterre thee from sinning, and the feare of men, much more should the feare of God doe the same, which doth punish the shameleſſe sinnes with the pains of hell. Which admonition did so terrifie her with sorrowe for her sinne, that forthwith she betooke herself to a penitent course of life.

These are the excellent effects of the Diuine presence: when a man doth set the same seriously before his eyes: for with what countenãce dare he cõmit so foule an act, as some sin is before God: considering how infinitely he hateth sinne and punisheth wickednesses with great seuerity, which will not leaue sinne vnpunished, either in this life, or in the life to come? S. Austen considering this saith: Lord, when I call to minde, that thou obseruest my wayes, and hast a watch ouer me day & night: and spyest out all my steppes, as if forgetful of all thy other creatures, thou diddest onely marke me: I am sodainely confounded with feare and shame, because there is a great

neceſſitie layde vpon me of liuing vprightly and well becauſe we doe all things in the ſight of a Iudge that ſeeth all things. Hitherto S. Auſtine: whereby we vnderſtand how great force a conſideration of the Diuine preſence hath, to make vs beware of ſinne.

CHAP. LXXVI.

How by the contemplation of the diuine preſence, temptations may be ouercome, and perſeuerance in vertue attained.



The contemplation of the Diuine preſence, doth not only make vs, that wee repent of ſinne committed, but alſo that we fall not into them againe: for while we place God as beholding him alwayes preſent, and lift vp our heart vnto him, there is ſtirred vp in our mindes, a certaine deſire of vanquiſhing our ghoſtly enemies.

enemies. Neither is the Diuine aide and assistance hereunto wanting: wicked Elders insulted ouer Susanna, that chaste and innocent woman, threatning her death, vnlesse she consented vnto their sinfull desires: let vs see by what way or meane shee resisted this temptation, to wit; she considered that she stood in the sight of God, whom she so placed before her eies, that raising vp her mind against temptation, shee chose rather to loose the reputation of her family, then to consent to sinne, for thus she answered, I am in a great straite, if I doe this thing, death is present: if I doe it not, I cannot escape your hands: it is better for me not doing it, to fall into your hands, then to sinne in the sight of the Lord. O worthy saying, and worthy to bee vsed in euery temptation of the Diuell, and the world. I will rather endure death, then sinne in the sight of God.

The valiant Souldier, when in warlike conflict he considereth the eies of the Emperor or Captaine

taine to be vpon him, he fighteth more contagiously: for he knoweth that it is in the power of the Emperor or Captaine after the victorie obtained, to distribut the spoiles, and reward the well deseruing. What should not the Souldier of Christ doe in his daily Combate with the Diuell, the World, and the Flesh seeing the eyes of the Diuine Maiestie cast vpon him, remembring the eternall rewards, while he knoweth, that in the verie conflict, Diuine assistance will not faile him?

The verity of this daily experience doth confirme: for, if it happen, that some seruant of GOD (occasion being offered of wrath and anger) to bee vnmindfull of the diuine Godhead, neither ordinarily to lift vp his heart to God, we see that he doth easily slippe, or fall into words of impatiencie, or at least to haue some peruerse cogitations in his minde: but if hee haue his heart erected to God, and referre al his pious desires to him, he is soone

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at quiet, neither doth his minde giue place to turbulent perturbations.

Palladius visiting his Friend Diocles, amongst other documents receiued from him, being a holy man, this was one: A man (saith he) without the contemplation of the Diuine presence, is eyther a diuel or a beast: a beast, if he giue place to the temptations of the Flesh, and carnall delights: a diuel, if to wrath, arrogancie, and the like. When Palladius asked him, by what meanes a man might haue his soule quiet, and alwaies fixed vpon God, hee answered: So often as the mind is occupied in any godly cogitatiõs which doth direct to God, then it is fixed with God: but when it forgetteth God, then it be omes either a diuell or a beast. This he vnderstood to be done not onely when a man falleth into any great or capitall sinne, but also into some lighter sins, whereby he is made like either a Diuell or a beast. Wherefore the seruant of God may in no case neglect at any time the

Diuine presence, especially when occasions are offered of wrath, impatiency, pride, vnlawfull desires, and such others. Hee may not (I say) at any time neglect with watchfulnesse, to lift vp his minde to God, to craue by prayer his daily assistance.

CHAP. LXXVII.

How by this exercise of the diuine presence, stability of heart, the perfection of vertues, and outward cleanneſse are attained.

AMongst these excellent good things which are got by this holy exercise, stability of heart is numbred to be one: for first of all it is manifest, that Man was created for this end, that euen in this life he should be firmely ioined vnto God by contemplation and loue, and in the other heauenly life by cleare vision. Now, after that he hath separated himselfe from GOD by sinne, and hath turned vnto the creatures, beginning to seeke rest in them, (although

(although that hee had neuer found that hee was made for them) or that any desire of them could satisfie him: hence it is, that his cogitations and desires do transport him sometimes this way, and sometimes that way, and so he falleth into great instability of heart: which the Prophet Ieremy bewailed in this maner, in his Lament. Ierusalem hath sinned a sinne, therfore she is made vnstable, erring from one place to another.

And surely the Soule vexed with diuers desires of Earthly things, is much troubled: hereof comes the diuisions of the heart: for so many diuisions there are, as thoughts & studies to which it diuerteth. Now, in diuision things are destroyed & cōsumed according to that of the Prophet, Osee 10. Their heart is diuided, therefore they shall perish.

Into this wofull estate do they chiefely fall, which commit any capitall sinne, for they are pulled from the loue of God, and are in soule dead by the death of sin, in-

to which they fall, that are too much addicted to the loue of earthly things. Now these euils can by no more effectuall Antidote or preseruatiue against euil be turned away, then by the holy exercise of the Diuine presence. For when as our minde doth often eleuate her cogitations & desires to God, conuersing with him, & entering (as it were) a familiarity, by little and little it is setled and confirmed: for that it is drawne from things subiect to instability, and vnited vnto him who is not subiect to any shadow of change. When the Ship in the Sea is tossed hither and thither there is great danger that it dash not against a rock, the safest way is to cast some strong Anker: so when the mind of man in the Ocean of this world is tossed with diuers and dangerous thoughts the safest and surest way is to apply it and fasten it to the Anker of the Diuine presence, that it may come to stability, & that constancie which is acceptable to God. Wherefore that spoken by the

the Wiseman, doth well best the seruant of God, Eccl. 27. The godly man continueth in his wisdome, as the Sun, but the foole is changed as the Moone.

Now this remembrance of God or diuine presence, doth not only compose and order the inwarde man, but also the outward. For as the seruant of some great personage is by no meanes better contained within the lists and limits of dutie, or moued to carry himselfe soberly, then if he vnderstand he is beheld of his Lord, & diligently obserued in his actiõs: so the seruant of GOD is by no meanes more effectually retained within the actions of pietie, then if he remember that he is alwaies conuersant in the sight of GOD as the starres of heauen in the presence of the Sunne, from whom they receiue their light. Wherefore the Wiseman said well, Eccles 14. Blessed is the man that continueth in wisedome, and thinketh of the beholding of God.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXXVIII.

How this exercise of the Diuine presence doth bring spirituall comfort.

FOR the continuance of the race of a spirituall life, spirituall Ioy, is a matter of no small moment which is felt of the seruants of GOD, and had in price. This truely wholesome and spirituall good is principally procured and kept by the exercise of the Diuine presence. For euen as hee which attempteth any great and dangerous enterprize, is marueilously refreshed if any obiect or sight be offered whereby hee may be deliuered from his danger: or if he chance to see some good friend whom he hath not seene for many yeares, is wonderfully comforted: so the soule of the seruant of God, when it considereth with how many dangers it is compassed, when it once turneth the eies of the minde to God, who is endowed

dowed with goodneſſe, and ready to giue helpe is marueilouſly comforted and refreſhed.

King Ioſias, becauſe he promoted the diuine worſhip, & beſtowed many benefits vpõ the people of God, he hath left behinde him a ioyfull remembrance of his name, The remembrance of Ioſias (ſaith Eccliſiaſticus) is like a ſweet ointment. S. Bernard, confeſſeth of himſelfe, that ſo ſoone as hee entred a religious courſe of life, he much reioyced in the preſence of heauenly minded men. If the ſight and memory of a iuſt man be ioyfull, what ſhall the remembrance of God be? May, what ſhall his preſence be? in whome we may behold infinite beautie, and other perfections? Iudas Machabeus entering into a warlike attempt, was wonderfully comforted by the preſence of GOD, whom he was perſwaded to bee preſent to aſſiſt him: theſe are the fruits of this holy exerciſe Therfore, let the ſeruant of God endeuour this exerciſe at euery time & place: and ſo often as he waketh

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in the night, let him foorthwith lift vp the eies of his mind, to behold the diuine maiestie present: let him do the same when hee riseth earely out of his bed, if hee passe through publike waies, casting his eies modestly vnto the ground, let him raise vp his spirituall eyes to God: when hee hath conference with men, or is conuersant in affaires, let him fasten one eye of consideration vpon his affaires now in hand, and let him lift vp the other to God, requiring his helpe.

If he bee fallen into some grieuous Disease, so that he cannot performe his accustomed taske of Deuotion, let him not be grieued but in stead thereof, let him lift vp his heart to God, inuocating him, and laying before him his desires, and with this onely labour let him bee content and quiet, for by so doing, he shal supply other duties. Thus did the Prophet Dauid: Thy Name (O Lord) and remembrance is in the desire of my soule: my soul hath longed for thee in the night season, and

and with my ſpirit haue I earely awaked vnto thee.

CHAP. LXXIX.

By what meanes this gift of hauing God preſent in our actions is to be had.

HItherto we haue conſidered the excellent fruits of this Diuine exercise, now it remaines, that wee knowe the meanes howe this may be attained: of the which, the firſt is that we craue the ſame of GOD, of whom commeth euery good and perfect gift. For as from Chriſt our Sauiour all other helpes vnto ſaluation doe proceede and come: ſo this, beſeeching him humbly by his infinite mercy, and merits of his paſſion, that we may alwaies remember him, and haue our harts lifted vp vnto him, and there is no doubt but hee will grant our requeſts, if with aſſured faith and liuely deſire we aſke this of him.

Another meane to haue God preſent, may bee, if we vſe ſome ſigues:

signes: by the sight whereof, we may be brought to remember God: as the placing of some sentence in that part of the house, wherein we are most conuersant, as thus: Sinne not, because God seeth thee: Or that of the Wiseman: The eyes of the Lord are in euery place, beholding the good and euill: Or that of Dauid, I had euer GOD in my sight: Or that of Tobie to his Sonne: All the dayes of thy life, haue God in thy minde. By this, or any other meanes to stirre vp the remembrance of the Diuine presence, it is helpfull to our dulnesse: and so much briefly of the first meane putting vs in mind of the Diuine presence.

The second is, a daily, and particular examination of our consciences, whither or no we set God present in our actions: this examination is often to bee had, wherein we require of our conscience euery euening, whether we haue God present in our actions all the day: if wee haue so done, let vs giue him thankes,

for

for it is his gift and goodnesse, and let vs beseech him to continue the same: if it be otherwise, let vs be sorrowfull, and purpose to amend.

A third meane is, to make this a matter of great care: for as he which hath a purpose to builde a house, is full of thoughts, how to bring it to passe: the very care therof takes away both his sleep and meat: the same is often done about the education of children. No otherwaies falleth it out with him that is carefull to set God euer present before the eies of his minde.

The fourth meane, and that which is aboue all, to help to attain this holy exercise of the presence of God, is the true loue of God: which when it hath taken roote in the heart of the seruant of God, it by and by stirres him vp to direct his minde to God.

For this is the nature of Loue, to transport it self into the thing that is loued, whereby it may be united with it, and be made one with it. Hence it commeth to

passe,

passe, that euermore we remember the thing we loue, we thinke of it, we desire it, and doe gladly receiue it according to that of our Sauiour, Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also From hence it commeth, that all the difficulty of this exercise is in the beginning, vntill the soule come vnto this great loue of God: for as soone as loue doeth possesse the heart, there is nothing more pleasant then the presence of God

CHAP. LXXX.

How this exercise, and all other good and godly actions, ought not to be deferred.

First, for that time is a thing most precious.

Secondly, for that man is not Lord of the time, and it is therefore granted him of God, to dispose well of it.

Thirdly, for that God doeth take time from them that doe neglect it.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, for that wee ought to labour in this and other holy exercises while we haue time.

Fiftly, how we may proceede to redeeme the time.

Of the first of these we are to consider first of all, that time is precious, by that of the Angel in the 10. of the Reuelation, Time shall be no more: meaning a precious opportunity of prouiding for an estate to come: which also sheweth, that God vouchsafeth vs a great grace, in granting vs this time. King Dauid was euer in feare of making losse of time, in that he said, Mine eyes preuent the night watches. Arise, arise quickly (saith S. Bernard) O Christian, be ashamed that the Sunne should preuent thee. The holy men of God knowing how precious time was, and of such value that it could not bee valued, did euer frugally spend the same. O (saith S. Bernard) what is more deare, more to be loued, more profitable then time? nothing more worthy, and yet nothing more contemptible.

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The daies of saluation passe away, no man perceiuing it: they flye away without hope of returne. I beseech you brethren contemne not the time, or little houre which God hath giuen you. To prepare euerlasting glorie is precious, that is precious, a little whereof is worth great treasure: of this nature is time.

Of the seconde, that man is Lord of the time, and that it is therefore granted him of God to dispose well of it. Concerning earthly possessiõs, we cannot cal thẽ properly ours, according to that of the Apostle, Gal. 8. Dum. tempus habemus, while wee haue time. Now we are withal to consider, that this Momentum temporis, for it is but a moment, compared to eternity, that it is (I say) Momentum magni momenti, a moment of great moment, grãted vs not to be wasted in vaine, much lesse in sinfull delights. A man ought not to cast his temporall goods into the sea, but to spend them in all good & godly vses, answerable to that of the fore-

foze-named Apostle, proceeding in this manner. While wee haue time let vs doe good.

The Prophet Dauid saith, Dum hodie appellatur, while it is called to day, psal. 94. In the gospell, the kingdome of heauen is compared to certaine, which receiue their Maisters Treasure vpon an account, and to occupie it vntill his comming. The time (saith S. Herom) which is bestowed vpon vnprofitable or idle Delights, is lost, and doth perish as if it neuer had beene. It is reported of Vespasian, that when he had passed a day without benefiting others, that hee would say to his friends, Friends, I haue lost a day. Wherefore, seeing that time is granted vs to dispose well of our future condition, let not any houre passe without fruit.

Of the third, to call to minde, how God will take time from them that do neglect it, we haue a manifest warrant by that in the third of the Reuel. If thou watch not, I will come vppon thee as a theefe: where God exhorteth, first

to

to watch: secondly, he threatneth surprising of them that are slothfull, and spoiling them of that which ought to be most precious to wit, Time: for time is (as it were) treasure in the house of a sinner which treasure, if we well conserue, we may make an happy marchandize for the world to come: and is also likened to the bird, that at euery flight looseth a feather.

Of the fourth we may consider how we ought to labour in this, & other holy exercises while we haue time. Whatsoeuer thy hand is able to do (saith the Wiseman) do it instantly. Ioseph in the seuen yeares of plenty, prouided for the yeares of dearth. Noah built an Arke, while the weather was faire: the wise virgins prouided Oyle before market was done.

Of the fift, we are last of all to consider, how we may proceed to redeeme the time: Time is said to be captiue, when we vse it contrary to the minde of the giuer: but it is redeemed or set at liberty, when we vse it to fulfill his

will

will, and keepe his Commandements. The meane of redeeming the time, is laid downe by that of the Apostle, Rom. 6. As men haue giuen their members Seruants to vnrighteousnesse, so let them giue them to be seruants of righteousnesse: of euill, let them become good: of cruell, gentle: of negligent, watchfull: in a word, to spend the rest of their liues as that they may be pure and holy, that so at the last they may attaine everlasting glory, which God grant for Christs sake, Amen.

A briefe forme of commending ones selfe to God.

INto the hands of thine ineffable mercy, O Lord I commend my soule, my body, my senses, speech my counsell, my wit, my thoughts, my workes, and deeds: all the necessities of my soule and body, my comming in, my going forth, my faith, and conuersation, my course, and end of my life, the day and houre of my departure, my death, my rest, and

and resurrection with thy saints and elect for euer. Amen.

Lord grant mee an hatred of euils passed, a contempt of sinful delights present, a desire of true delights which are to come: grãt me also I beseech thee the remouing of occasions of euill, the soundnesse of affection to refuse, & power to resist, that my ghostly enemy neuer say, I haue preuailed against him.

O Omnipotent and O Mercifull God, which diddest adde to the life of King Ezechiah fifteene yeares, when he prayed vnto thee weeping: grant mee thy vnworthy seruant so much space before the day of my death, that I may bewaile all my sinnes, and by thy grace attaine remission of them, by Iesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Sit Laus Deo.

FINIS.